Community Chaplaincy and Desistance:
Seeing a New Future

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The research has been conducted independently and the views of the authors remain their own. Approval to undertake the work was obtained from the Institute of Criminology's Research Ethics Committee.

We would like to acknowledge the contribution to this evaluation made by staff at the Community Chaplaincy Association, Futures Unlocked, West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project, Peninsula Initiative Community Chaplaincy, C2C Social Action and members of the Research Steering Group. We are particularly grateful to the volunteers and service users who talked to us about community chaplaincy.

Photos in this document are not from actual community chaplaincies and are for illustrative effect only.

Foreword

I welcome this report as a carefully written product of well-constructed research into the nature of community chaplaincy and its contribution to desistance.

Much of it confirms what we have believed, namely that community chaplaincy does indeed help those who have been labelled "criminals" to see a new future for themselves. This confirmation comes in a way which makes our claim more credible to those we work with: those in prison and probation, and, those in charities with similar aims and values. The report highlights examples, using quotes from extensive interviews, and reviews our approach with the requirements of desistance-focussed practice.

As the report points out each of 22 community chaplaincies is different and yet the researchers noted common themes behind our support which include: "honesty, genuineness, persistence and care". It names as key to our approach: the nature of the relationships that develop between service users, staff and volunteers, the broad range of practical help on offer, and the values that underpin the delivery of the service.

Community chaplaincies are to a greater or lesser extent faith-based organisations and this is explored in the study. As someone whose contribution is an expression of my faith, I am pleased to see the word "care" being used by clients, volunteers and staff. We hear from a volunteer "this is something I care about and want to do". We hear from clients: it "just shows that they do really care"; and an endorsement of "spot on" to the description of the mentor as someone who cared, who knew what he was talking about.

Care goes beyond the personal act of offering and receiving. We find it used to describe the "Careful matching of mentors and mentees", and it underlies training, supporting and retaining volunteers, the extent to which we reach out to families and are able to support all aspects of an individual's journey to being a valued member of the community.

A full expression of care leads to a determination to review what we are doing to improve it and find new ways of supporting people to fuller lives. I welcome the report's final section "Looking Ahead". There is much here for each of our community chaplaincies for the short and long term. We know that we cannot achieve all that is needed alone. We welcome the opportunities to work with others who share our aspirations and recognise the values behind them.

This report provides a snapshot of a good past with the opportunities to create a better future in fruitful partnerships. Thank you to all involved in this valuable collaboration: to our funders, the researchers and supportive colleagues, each of participant projects and contributing individuals, and finally to our National Secretary, Matt Wall, for his management.

I hope you will share my enjoyment in the report and I very much look forward to hearing your reaction.

Matthew Devlin
Chair, Community Chaplaincy Association

Contents

1.0 Summary

- Community chaplaincies are independent faith based voluntary organisations providing resettlement support and mentoring for people leaving prison. Community chaplaincies usually start their work in prison, meet the individual at the prison gates on release and provide on-going support in the community for as long as needed. They are multi-faith organisations and work with offenders of all faiths and none. The Community Chaplaincy Association (CCA) is the umbrella group for this network, supporting member projects by providing resources and enabling the sharing of ideas and information.
- This research arises from the desire of the CCA to ensure that the work of community chaplaincies supports the process of desistance for people leaving prison. Desistance is shaped by age and maturity, social bonds, situation and environment, and individual agency. It is a highly individualised process best understood as a process rather than as an event. There are setbacks and relapses on the path to a new future.
- The objectives of the study, as agreed with the CCA at the outset of the work, are to:
  - Examine the key factors in the approach taken by Community Chaplaincy.
  - Highlight those factors that represent 'added value' above the routine practice of post-release supervision.
  - Assess the extent to which these factors are congruent with the principles associated with 'primary' and 'secondary' desistance.
- The study draws on 57 semi-structured interviews and analysis of existing data from community chaplaincy records. These data were supplemented by information gathered from informal interaction at visits to community chaplaincies and attendance at community chaplaincy meetings. The interview phase of the fieldwork, which took place between September 2016 and April 2017, followed the progress of a sample of service users from two community chaplaincies. The aim was to interview the service users on three occasions (to capture more than a snapshot of their experience) and, in addition, to interview staff and volunteers from each project.
- The two community chaplaincies involved in the interview phase of the research were the West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project (WYCCP) and Futures Unlocked (the community chaplaincy in Warwickshire). C2C Social Action and the Peninsula Initiative Community Chaplaincy arranged focus groups made up of female service users. Many other community chaplaincies contributed to the study by providing information and hosting a research visit.
- The study shows that relationships rooted in community chaplaincy's distinctive ethos are at the heart of the work. Other important findings from the research include:
  - The community chaplaincy ethos is expressed in practice that sees the intrinsic worth of each individual, is prepared to persevere, and remains committed to the possibility of future flourishing. This ethos is underpinned, for community chaplaincy, by the faith-based foundation of each organisation.
  - Service users describe relationships with staff and volunteers that are genuine, helpful, reciprocal and caring; they compare these relationships favourably with those built with workers at other agencies. Personal and professional boundaries in community chaplaincy are not straightforward; for example, mentoring relationships are not friendships, but they are often experienced as 'like friendships'.
  - Key factors in the approach taken by community chaplaincy are the nature of the relationships that develop between service users, staff and volunteers, the broad range of practical help on offer, and the values that underpin the delivery of the service.
  - Community chaplaincy contributes to the goals of the prison and probation services. However, it is best understood as independent of the criminal justice system, positioning itself alongside other community groups working with people who are disadvantaged, excluded and overlooked.

- The work of community chaplaincy requires funding that is adequate and secure. When income is uncertain the expertise of staff and volunteers is lost and organisational energy is diverted away from the development of the service to the raising of funds.
- The community chaplaincy approach is consistent with existing ideas about desistance focussed practice and service users describe how community chaplaincy helps them to move forward, keep out of trouble and see a new future.
- Individualising support for change is a real strength of the community chaplaincy approach. The service is flexible, not time limited, and not tied to an office base. Staff and volunteers are able to respond to the client's priorities, which often involves spending a great deal of time with people with complex needs.
- Community chaplaincy can be thought of as the 'scaffolding' that supports service users through the transition from prison to stability in the community, scaffolding that can be gradually removed or temporarily reinforced in response to progress or problems.

- The study identifies good practice principles for community chaplaincies seeking to support service users on the path to desistance. Community chaplaincies (both new and existing) can put these points into action by:
  - Continuing with the work that community chaplaincy does well: providing individualised support for change; offering hope; allowing second and subsequent chances; creating trusting, caring and authentic relationships.
  - Collecting and recording information about the changing circumstances of service users. As well as providing evidence needed by funders and partners, this is also a means of recognising and celebrating progress.
  - Considering whether the knowledge and skills of the community chaplaincy suggest maintaining a focus on a particular cohort of service users. For example, for some chaplaincies, it may be appropriate to build expertise with persistent offenders, or individuals with housing problems, or women.
  - Alternatively, considering what new resources are needed to work with a more diverse group of service users. For example, this may include recruiting a wider pool of volunteers and building links across faith communities.
  - Developing and sustaining a team approach. This provides support for volunteers and staff, while creating a framework for service users that endures beyond the period of a one-to-one relationship.
  - Arguing for community chaplaincy on its own terms. The service has distinctive aims and characteristics. While community chaplaincy contributes to the aims of the criminal justice system, this is not its principal function.
  - Building positive working relationships with prison and with probation.
  - Learning from existing experience in the CCA network about broadening community chaplaincy provision, particularly in the areas of housing provision and work with service users' families.
  - Linking those service users who would otherwise be significantly socially isolated with networks and opportunities brokered by staff and volunteers. This is an important way in which community chaplaincy assists the development of social capital.
  - Galvanising faith groups to engage with community chaplaincy, enabling them to be more active in this work and challenging them to be a community in which service users are straightforwardly welcome.
  - Recognising that community chaplaincy is more than the sum of its parts. The blend of mentoring, practical help and emotional support is held together by the values of hope, love, forgiveness and belief in the importance of every person.

2.0 The context for the research

2.1 Community chaplaincy

Community chaplaincies are independent faith based voluntary organisations providing resettlement support and mentoring for people leaving prison. Community chaplaincies usually start their work in prison, meet the individual at the prison gates on release and provide on-going support in the community for as long as needed. The Community Chaplaincy Association (CCA) is the umbrella group for this network, supporting member projects by providing resources and enabling the sharing of ideas and information.

The Community Chaplaincy Theory of Change is a way of working that draws on the experience of practitioners and research evidence about effective interventions (CCA/NPC nd). It makes clear that mentoring is the approach used to support service users and encourage change. The Theory of Change argues that establishing a trusting relationship between a mentor and a mentee is the catalyst for bringing about lasting change. It suggests that these factors help the service to be effective:

- Co-located at prisons: accessible, drop-in culture,
- Knowledge/experience of systems (e.g. benefits, housing),
- Rigorous volunteer recruitment and training,
- Careful matching of mentors and mentees,
- Flexible/adaptable approach,
- Part of a national network – enables improved cross-area work and gives opportunity for sharing best practice,
- Faith ethos: see humanity in people, desire to do good, support each other,
- Partnerships with community organisations and statutory providers.

Community chaplaincies take a holistic approach to meeting people's needs, working with each person as an individual and respecting their needs and goals. Mentors work with mentees in a variety of ways including: signposting mentees to resources and advocating on their behalf, supporting progress and listening to mentees' concerns, encouraging pro-social attitudes and behaviour, supporting family contact and demonstrating hope and optimism.

Community chaplaincies harness the resources that are available within faith communities, most particularly volunteers who give their time as mentors to support those who are seeking to make a fresh start after leaving prison. Community chaplaincies are multi-faith and work with offenders of all faiths and none.

Community chaplaincies take a holistic approach to meeting people's needs

The first community chaplaincy organisations in England and Wales were established in the early years of the 21st century (Whitehead 2011). The development of this work, alongside other faith-based responses to the problem of re-offending, received support from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). In 2006 NOMS sponsored the employment of a community chaplaincy development officer by the organisation Clinks[1] (NOMS 2007). The consultation paper 'Believing We Can', published by NOMS and the Youth Justice Board in 2007, praised the support provided by community chaplaincies to individuals leaving prison and asked how the learning from this work could be shared.

1 Clinks is the organisation which 'supports, represents and campaigns for the voluntary sector working with offenders'. http://www.clinks.org/resources/about-clinks

The CCA was registered as a charity in 2010. It currently has 24 organisations in full membership, with others as associate members or in an early stage of development. Members vary across a number of key dimensions including: size of organisation, financial strength, geographical location and extent of operating area, balance between paid and volunteer staff, range of activity, prominence of faith as a key principle, relationship with prison service, relationship with the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies.

As with all small voluntary sector agencies, community chaplaincy organisations draw their funding from a number of sources, including grants, donations, and contracts. The funding position is fragile. Community chaplaincies expand, shrink or close as income fluctuates, and much staff and trustee time is taken up with fund-raising and bid-writing.

The contractual relationship between the criminal justice voluntary sector (including community chaplaincies) and the prison and probation services is now shaped by the Government's Transforming Rehabilitation reforms (Ministry of Justice 2013b). These reforms divided the work of the probation service between a new public sector National Probation Service (NPS) and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs). All but one CRC is led by a private sector company and all CRCs contract with voluntary sector organisations (in their 'supply chain') to provide services intended to reduce re-offending. Transforming Rehabilitation has introduced marketisation and competition to the provision of probation and resettlement services.

The Transforming Rehabilitation reforms also introduced post-sentence statutory supervision for prisoners released from sentences shorter than 12 months, and stressed the importance of 'through-the-gate' work providing continuity of help for people moving from custody back into the community. The policy documents strongly endorsed the role that organisations like community chaplaincies could play in delivering criminal justice services: 'the voluntary sector has an important contribution to make in mentoring and turning offenders' lives around' (Ministry of Justice 2013b:3). Community chaplaincy organisations have experience in mentoring and in working through the gate that pre-dates these reforms.

The period since the implementation of Transforming Rehabilitation has, however, been challenging across the criminal justice voluntary sector. A number of concerns have emerged: new contractual arrangements have cut across established ways of working, small voluntary sector organisations are poorly represented in CRC supply chains, and funding for many services has been reduced (Clinks 2016). Some community

chaplaincy organisations have formal contracts with their local CRCs, others bid unsuccessfully to join the CRC supply chain, and the remainder chose not to seek a CRC contract. No community chaplaincy is funded entirely (or even mostly) through its contract with the CRC and, where they do exist, CRC contracts provide funding for a limited number of mentoring sessions. The community chaplaincy service would not be delivered without the financial support provided by grant-giving trusts and individual donations.

2.2 Desistance from crime

This research arises from the desire of the CCA to ensure that the work of community chaplaincies supports the process of desistance for people leaving prison. The concept of desistance has received significant theoretical and empirical attention over the past twenty years (Bottoms 2014), leading to an understanding of desistance as a process shaped by age and maturity, social bonds, situation and environment, and individual agency. It is a highly individualised process, as no two individuals are faced with the same set of circumstances (McNeill and Weaver 2010).

Desistance is best understood as a process rather than as an event; individuals who have been persistent offenders move gradually to a life without offending. There are setbacks and relapses on the path to a new future.

It can be helpful to identify phases in the desistance process. For example, a distinction can be made between primary and secondary desistance. Primary desistance refers to an absence of offending; a change of behaviour. Secondary desistance describes a change in identity; a stage where the individual no longer thinks of themselves as an offender (Clinks 2013). McNeill (2016) further added the concept of tertiary desistance; the stage at which the individual is accepted and recognised in the community in this new identity.

Nugent and Schinkel (2016) suggest that these stages risk implying that desistance is a linear process. As an alternative they propose the terms act-desistance, identity-desistance and relational-desistance. Act-desistance is about behaviour, identity-desistance is about the individual's sense of themselves, and relational-desistance is about acceptance and recognition from other people. These ideas are all part of the desistance process, but are equally important and do not necessarily follow one after another.

Ministry of Justice (2014) judged mentoring to be a promising approach to the reduction of re-offending

McNeill et al (2012), drawing on the research evidence, have identified a set of principles for desistance-focussed practice. These are:

- being realistic about the complexity and difficulty of the process,
- individualising support for change,
- building and sustaining hope,
- recognising and developing people's strengths,
- respecting and fostering agency (or self-determination),
- working with and through relationships (both personal and professional),
- developing social as well as human capital,
- recognising and celebrating progress.

As Bottoms (2014) stresses, principles such as these are yet to be extensively evaluated. However, they provide practitioners and researchers with practical ideas about how to develop new ways of working.

2.3 Mentoring, desistance and reducing re-offending

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation defines mentoring as 'a voluntary, mutually beneficial and purposeful relationship in which an individual gives time to support another to enable them to make changes in their life'[2]. A wide variety of mentoring projects are run in criminal justice settings; inevitably this diversity complicates the task of comparing projects and judging their effectiveness (Taylor et al 2013). Hucklesby and Wincup (2014) identify this complexity of definition, point to the weakness of much existing research into mentoring outcomes, and ask what happens to the nature of mentoring when it is transferred from voluntary relationship to criminal justice intervention.

In a review of research evidence, the Ministry of Justice (2014) judged mentoring to be a promising approach to the reduction of re-offending, one which would benefit from further research. Findings from existing studies point to the effectiveness of schemes that begin in prison and provide mentoring support as people make the transition into the community. There are indications that the length of the mentoring relationship is important too, with a suggestion that, to be effective, mentoring relationships must last for more than one or two sessions.

Taylor et al (2013) reviewed the research investigating the extent to which mentoring interventions led to an improvement in six areas known to be associated with desistance: employment; engagement in programmes and interventions; housing; health; attitudinal, cognitive or motivational change; and family and community relationships. They point to tentative evidence indicating that mentoring has positive outcomes for employment, engagement and housing. The evidence for improvement in the other three areas was more limited. Taylor et al (2013) suggest that mentoring may serve to reduce re-offending by providing continuity of support and acting as a bridge to other services.

Community chaplaincy is a faith-based project, a point that distinguishes its service from that of other organisations delivering mentoring in the criminal justice system. In the 'Believing We Can' consultation paper (a document intended to promote the contribution of faith-based organisations to the task of reducing re-offending) NOMS (2007) noted the long history of faith-based voluntary sector work with prisoners and former prisoners. Faith was seen to provide (for some individuals) support and motivation through a process of change; faith-based organisations had the potential to draw on resources and volunteers from faith communities and groups.

The CCA asserts that its distinctive ethos and approach to service users is based on the shared multi-faith principles and beliefs of hope, love, belief, forgiveness, restoration of relationships, and walking alongside. It points to the relevance of these values across religions and concludes 'The faith ethos of Community Chaplaincy provides a firm foundation for the work that we do, a motivation for doing it, and ultimately, a profound benefit for those we work with' (CCA 2011:2).

O'Connor and Bogue (2010) look specifically at the role that faith communities working with the criminal justice system can play in supporting the desistance process. They judge that the narratives of faith and the narratives of desistance share in common themes of agency, relationship, growth and authenticity. In practical terms they view faith groups as one of the sources of the community resources required for effective correctional practice (Dowden and Andrews 2004).

O'Connor and Bogue (2010: 305) highlight mentoring as a potentially fruitful faith-based partnership between the voluntary and statutory sectors; they describe it as 'one form of such collaboration that can bring a huge amount of resources to the table'. They give the example of the effective work of Circles of Support and Accountability, an initiative which involves trained and supervised volunteers supporting former prisoners (identified as at risk of committing future harmful offences) to re-integrate into the community in a positive way. They recommend that probation agencies work more closely with faith-based organisations to enhance community development work.

Armstrong's (2014) work demonstrates the importance of trust to the process of faith-based mentoring. Drawing on an ethnographic study of prisoners and their mentors, she explains how volunteers motivated

2 Mentoring and Befriending Foundation http://www.mandbf.org/mbf-membership/what-is-mentoring-and-befriending

by faith are able to bestow unearned trust on mentees who, in response, are able to respond by being trustworthy or (in harder cases) communicate honestly about difficulty and failure (trusting their mentor with this information).

Existing empirical evidence about the process and impact of community chaplaincy also points to the importance of qualities such as trust and authenticity in the relationships between service users, staff and volunteers (see, for example, Evidencing Change 2011; Barefoot 2015). Whitehead (2011), drawing on interviews conducted across six community chaplaincies, highlights the unconditional nature of the support offered to former prisoners, the role of relationships in reducing re-offending, and the potential for community chaplaincy to promote social as well as criminal justice.

The Justice Data Lab (a Ministry of Justice project that undertakes re-offending studies for small organisations) has produced data for a number of community chaplaincies. The findings of these studies are generally inconclusive (Ministry of Justice 2013a; Ministry of Justice 2013c; Ministry of Justice 2016). They point to the need for larger scale outcome evaluations and identify the methodological challenge of measuring the success of complex interventions.

The focus of this study is qualitative rather than quantitative. It contributes to the existing knowledge about the nature of community chaplaincy by investigating the perspectives of the people involved: staff, volunteers and service users.

3.0 The research process

3.1 Aims of the study

This study was commissioned by the CCA with the overall aim of examining the operation of community chaplaincy and its impact on the process of desistance.

The objectives of the study, as agreed with the CCA at the outset of the work, are to:

1. **Examine the key factors in the approach taken by Community Chaplaincy.**
2. **Highlight those factors that represent 'added value' above the routine practice of post-release supervision.**
3. **Assess the extent to which these factors are congruent with the principles associated with 'primary' and 'secondary' desistance.**

3.2 The study methodology

The study draws on semi-structured interviews and analysis of existing data from community chaplaincy records. These data were supplemented by information gathered from informal interaction at visits to community chaplaincies and attendance at community chaplaincy meetings. Interviews were conducted with service users, volunteers and staff. The data from records provides basic biographical information about service users, along with some detail about areas of risk and need.

These methods were chosen on the basis that they were likely to generate relevant findings and were practical, manageable and ethical in the context of the study schedule and budget. The initial proposal for the study was agreed and ethical approval obtained towards the end of 2015. The CCA successfully secured further funding for the study (making it possible to undertake follow-up interviews with service users) in the first half of 2016.

The research has been overseen by a Steering Group made up of representatives from the CCA, a number of community chaplaincies, the researchers and academic colleagues from the University.

The study began with a scoping phase, gathering information from conversations with and visits to a number of CCA member organisations. The work done is summarised below:

CCA member	Nature of contact
Open Gate	Telephone conversation with project manager
	Telephone interviews with project workers (x2)
Greater Manchester Community Chaplaincy	Visit to chaplaincy and Café Central (conversations with staff, volunteers and clients)
West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project (WYCCP)	Telephone conversations with project director (x2)
	Visit to WYCCP (conversations with project director, office manager and resettlement worker)
Yellow Ribbon	Telephone conversations with project director (x2)
	Visit to Yellow Ribbon (conversations with project director, project staff, community chaplains, service users and mentors)
	Telephone interviews with volunteer mentors (x2)

CCA member	Nature of contact
Futures Unlocked	Visit to Futures Unlocked (conversations with project staff and community chaplains)
	Second visit to Futures Unlocked (conversations with volunteer mentors at peer support meeting)
	Telephone interviews with volunteer mentors (x6)
Release Lincs	Telephone interview with community chaplain
Feltham Community Chaplaincy	Telephone conversation with chief executive
Inside Out (Wormwood Scrubs)	Telephone interview with outreach worker
Peninsula Initiative Community Chaplaincy	Telephone conversation with two staff members (with a focus on female service users)
Hope into Action (Hope into Action is not a CCA member organisation. It is a Christian charity working with churches to provide housing and support for vulnerable people in the community.)	Telephone conversations with executive director and local coordinator

Figure 3.1 : Conversations, interviews and visits in phase one

The second phase of the fieldwork, which took place between September 2016 and April 2017, followed the progress of a sample of service users from two community chaplaincies. The aim was to interview the service users on three occasions and, in addition, to interview staff and volunteers from each project. The two community chaplaincies involved in this phase of the research were the West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project (WYCCP) and Futures Unlocked (the community chaplaincy in Warwickshire). These two organisations volunteered to contribute to phase two of the research. Both are larger and well-established community chaplaincies; their differences and similarities are explored in detail in Section 4.

In order to capture as wide a range of views as possible (and in particular to avoid sampling only those service users who were keen to talk about their experience with community chaplaincy) the original plan was to gather data about everyone assessed and offered a service by Futures Unlocked and WYCCP who was released from prison from 1st September 2016 onwards, aiming to build a sample of up to ten service users in each location. The aim was to interview clients within three weeks of release and then on a six-weekly basis while contact continued.

From the start of September 2016, the researchers worked closely with the two community chaplaincies, gathering information about potential research participants and liaising about the possibility of undertaking interviews. One researcher worked with Futures Unlocked, the other with WYCCP.

Recruitment of service users into the study began slowly and, following discussion with the Steering Group, the fieldwork plan was modified slightly: the sampling criteria were broadened to include service users who were already in the community at the point of referral (and, therefore, were not worked with through the gate) and interviewees were thanked for their time with the gift of an £8 supermarket shopping voucher. By December 2016, 19 service users had been recruited into the study. It made sense to be more flexible with the timing of interviews too: some first interviews were conducted more than three weeks after the beginning of involvement with community chaplaincy, with second interviews around six weeks later, and third interviews around ten weeks after that.

Formal interviews with staff and volunteers were conducted in February and March 2017. Interviews were conducted with the staff who mentored or supported service user research participants, as well as

staff in management and administrative roles. A sample of volunteers was interviewed too; selected on the basis that they too had mentored or supported service user research participants.

The total number of interviews undertaken for this study was 57. Figure 3.2 shows how these were broken down between WYCCP and Futures Unlocked, and between service users, staff and volunteers.

	WYCCP	Futures Unlocked
First interview with service user	9	10
Second interview with service user	6	7
Third interview with service user	3	6
Interview with staff member	5	3
Interview with volunteer worker	3	5
Total	**57**	

Figure 3.2 Interviewees broken down by community chaplaincy and by group

Each interviewee was allocated a reference code as part of ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The two fieldwork sites were named J and K, each participant was allocated a number, and letters were used to denote role (s staff, c service user, v volunteer). Hence K2c is a service user from fieldwork site K. These codes are used throughout this report.

Section 4.2 provides more detail about the service user interviewees, including detail about age, ethnicity and gender. All the service user interviewees are men. This is not an unexpected outcome. WYCCP works almost exclusively with men leaving HMP Leeds and a significant majority of Futures Unlocked service users are men. However, the community chaplaincy service is provided to women. Some community chaplaincies (like Futures Unlocked) work with both men and women. Open Gate (the community chaplaincy for HMP Low Newton) works exclusively with women. The Steering Group considered how best to respond to the all-male nature of service user sample. The decision was made to share the study findings with female community chaplaincy service users to gauge whether there are significant gender differences in perspective that would merit further exploration. Two community chaplaincies (C2C Social Action and Peninsula Initiative Community Chaplaincy) offered to host a focus group with women service users led by one of the researchers; these both took place in August 2017 in Northampton and in St Austell.

The topic guides developed for use in this study drew on concepts from existing research and themes identified in phase one of the work. They can be found in Section 9.

Interview data and fieldwork notes were coded and analysed to identify key themes and concepts. NVivo, a computer software package, was used to aid the analysis process. The researchers sought to ensure the quality of the data analysis by working together, and with other colleagues at the University, to share thoughts and test the reliability of emerging findings.

3.3 Reflection on the study process

This section highlights a number of practical points that arose during the study, explains how they were resolved and discusses potential implications for the report's conclusions.

Existing community chaplaincy data

This study makes use of data gathered from records kept by Futures Unlocked and WYCCP. Community chaplaincies keep records for a number of purposes: to process referrals, to keep track of work done with current clients, to share information within the team, to monitor the work of staff and volunteers, to provide management information about client need and staff workload, and to report back to funders and other stakeholders. These records provided useful biographical information about the sample of service users interviewed in this study.

Both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked also use tools intended to measure the progress of service users over their period of involvement with community chaplaincy. These tools, intended to be completed as a joint piece of work between client and worker, consider areas for potential change (for example accommodation, employment, finance). Each area (or 'pathway' in the Futures Unlocked tool) is allocated a rating. The WYCCP tool uses numerical ratings, Futures Unlocked uses colours (red, amber and green). Repeated use of the tool (perhaps monthly) highlights areas of improvement or on-going difficulty.

Initial assessments of this kind were available for all service user interviewees and a source of useful data for this study. Subsequent assessments were not done systematically. This is not a surprising finding; completing assessment tools of this sort is often not a priority for busy caseworkers.

Anonymity

In line with ethical research practice, all research participants were assured of anonymity. For example, the consent form for workers and volunteers included the paragraph:

The information that you give to the researcher will be held in confidence. It will not be passed on to other staff, volunteers or service users. The researcher will only share information if it shows a significant risk of serious harm to you or someone else. The recording of your interview and any notes will be stored securely. The researcher will not identify anyone in the reports that are written about this research so your views will be anonymous.

A similar undertaking was made to service user research participants.

In writing this report care has been taken to deliver on this guarantee. The challenge (as in all studies that interview a small number of people who know each other well) is that the views expressed by service users may identify them to staff while the comments made by staff and volunteers may identify them to colleagues. On occasions, the report includes a quotation not directly attributed to the interviewee in a bid to reduce this risk.

Sampling service user interviewees

It did not prove possible to interview individuals who had only a fleeting contact with community chaplaincy post-release. The recruitment process for the research began with the community chaplaincy staff member giving the service user information about the study and asking permission to pass contact details onto the researcher. The first contacts between staff and service user post-release were often occupied with pressing practical and emotional difficulties, and not an appropriate moment to talk about the research. A significant proportion of potential service users lost contact with community chaplaincy at this early stage and their perspective (as a particularly hard-to-reach cohort) is missing from this study.

This study did not have the capacity to interview potential service users in prison prior to release. Interviewing at this stage in the process would gather data about people's intentions on release, but cannot explore the factors that influence the decision not to engage with community chaplaincy in the first days and weeks back in the community.

The study did manage to recruit almost every service user who engaged in more than a cursory way during the research period and, as a result, did not simply gather the perspectives of those who were keen to share positive (or negative) experiences with a researcher.

First, second and third service user interviews

Flexibility was needed with the timing of first and subsequent service user interviews to accommodate people's circumstances and availability. It was not possible to interview everyone within three weeks of beginning with community chaplaincy, for some people the process of attaining sufficient stability to consent to participate in research took longer than this.

Similarly, it was not possible to maintain a rigid timetable for second and third interviews. The researchers aimed for a gap of six weeks between first and second interviews, and then ten weeks to a third interview. However, it sometimes took a number of weeks to re-establish contact with the interviewee and agree an interview time.

At the first interview, service users were asked if they agreed to continue in the research process and for the researcher to have their contact details. When second and third interviews were due, the researcher sought to re-establish contact using these details or through community chaplaincy staff. Inevitably, it was not possible to interview all 19 service users on three occasions. Research contact was most often lost in cases where contact with community chaplaincy was lost too; some service users were back in prison or had simply drifted out of contact with their mentor or resettlement worker. In three cases, it was not possible to secure further interviews with people still receiving a community chaplaincy service. These service users did not respond to many invitations from the researcher and from the community chaplaincy to participate further.

Telephone and face-to-face interviews

This study is based on a pragmatic mixture of telephone and face-to-face interviews. Face-to-face interviews were initially preferred on the basis that they seemed likely to offer benefit in terms of building rapport. However, phone interviews proved more practical and sufficiently effective. Given the geographical distance between researchers and interviewees, phone interviews were much easier to schedule and then, if required, to reschedule.

For practical reasons (a combination of geography and researcher availability) some face-to-face client interviews were conducted in Warwickshire (sometimes at cafés and sometimes at approved premises[3]). All the WYCCP service user interviews were conducted on the phone.

Interviews with community chaplaincy staff were conducted face-to-face for reasons of both quality and practicality: these were relatively long interviews and straightforward to schedule. By contrast, the interviews with volunteers were conducted on the phone, enabling the volunteer to be at home and to be able to participate at a time convenient for them.

Most, but not all, interviews were audio-recorded. Recording was not possible in cases where face-to-face interviews were conducted in public places (such as cafés) and the use of a recording device would have been inappropriate. The researcher wrote a thorough report of each interview, drawing on written notes and the audio-recording.

3 Approved premises (formerly known as probation hostels) provide supervised accommodation for offenders. The majority of residents are recently released prisoners deemed to require enhanced supervision on grounds of public protection and risk management.

4.0 Research findings

4.1 What is community chaplaincy?

As discussed in Section 2, community chaplaincy organisations vary in a number of important ways including: size of agency, financial strength, geographical location and extent of operating area, balance between paid and volunteer staff, range of activity, prominence of faith as a key principle, and relationship with prison, probation and other statutory services.

One consequence of the diversity of community chaplaincies is that there are many approaches to practice. The service offered to a released prisoner (or indeed to service users who have not been recently released from prison) varies according to the resources and priorities of the chaplaincy. All chaplaincies offer personal and emotional support along with practical help. Some, but not all, chaplaincies describe their work as mentoring. Some, but not all, chaplaincies have a centre where service users can drop in and spend time. Some, but not all, chaplaincies provide and manage housing for people coming out of prison. A few chaplaincies have developed, or are considering the development of, social enterprises of their own.

All chaplaincies offer personal and emotional support along with practical help

WYCCP and Futures Unlocked share a number of features in common. As charities, both are governed by a Board of Trustees. Both organisations employ paid staff (in a mixture of full-time and part-time roles). Both are larger community chaplaincies and neither recruits staff and volunteers solely from faith communities. Both make considerable use of volunteers to support service users.

There are, though, significant differences between the two organisations. WYCCP works (almost exclusively) with men leaving HMP Leeds. It has premises just outside the prison where staff and volunteers work, and where service users are welcome for meetings, for more informal conversation and to put the kettle on. WYCCP has a director, an office and finance manager, two resettlement workers (working 35 and 33 hours per week), an assistant resettlement worker (35 hours per week) and three part-time staff members who recruit and support volunteers. The three WYCCP resettlement workers work directly with service users. They are frequently in the prison meeting prisoners who may benefit from the service. On release, service users continue to link with a resettlement worker who provides the on-going service. WYCCP volunteers – known as link workers – are recruited and trained to supplement and support the work of the resettlement worker. WYCCP describes itself as a 'through the gate resettlement organisation' providing 'holistic practical support and encouragement'.

As a consequence of its link with HMP Leeds, WYCCP works with male service users returning to the West Yorkshire area. WYCCP does not offer a service to foreign national prisoners and to men with convictions for sex offenders. At the time of fieldwork, WYCCP did not have a contractual arrangement with its local CRC.

Futures Unlocked, by contrast, is not linked with a specific prison. Its mission is to provide a service to people in Warwickshire. Its premises are in Rugby but staff and volunteers meet service users in a variety of locations across the county. The Rugby building includes a café (run by Futures Unlocked as a social enterprise), offices for Futures Unlocked staff and meeting space used not just by Futures Unlocked but other agencies (including the CRC).

Futures Unlocked employs an operations manager, two community chaplains, a resettlement worker and a café manager. The role of the community chaplain is to meet and assess potential clients, match suitable clients with a volunteer mentor, and then provide support throughout the mentoring process. It is the Futures Unlocked volunteer mentors who have the majority of contact with clients in the community,

with this work reviewed regularly by the community chaplain. In a small number of cases, usually those assessed as most risky or most complex, the chaplain also undertakes the mentoring role. The Futures Unlocked resettlement worker is a student on placement with the organisation, working directly with clients under the supervision of the community chaplains. Futures Unlocked describes itself as providing a 'through the gate mentoring service carried out by a dedicated and passionate team of volunteers'.

The two Futures Unlocked community chaplains are regularly at the two Warwickshire male resettlement prisons (HMP Hewell and HMP Featherstone), but Futures Unlocked also works with people returning to Warwickshire from other prisons. Futures Unlocked has male and female clients, with men making up around 95% of the caseload. The organisation does not exclude anyone on the basis of the offence, but undertakes its own risk assessment. Futures Unlocked does have a contract with the CRC to provide limited mentoring support to people leaving prison.

This brief introduction to the work of Futures Unlocked and WYCCP shows that the practice of community chaplaincy has a number of strands. Mentoring and befriending are important strands, but do not make up the whole service. Examples of activities from the wider community chaplaincy network include managing housing projects, creating opportunities for employment or volunteering, advocacy (with, for example, the health service or housing department), and the direct provision of food and other essential items.

Both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked, in common with all community chaplaincies, see the purpose of their work as to improve the life and circumstances of the service user. Chaplaincies describe their mission in phrases such as 'helping people make a fresh start', 'aiding resettlement and helping reduce the risks of re-offending', 'supporting ex-offenders to lead crime-free lives' and 'reducing re-offending and helping people to fulfil their potential'. Supporting people from custody into the community in a manner which supports the process of desistance is one of the things that community chaplaincy sets out to do.

To sum up, there is no typical community chaplaincy, each member organisation has developed in response to local opportunities and circumstances. WYCCP and Futures Unlocked are different from each other, and different from other CCA members. As a consequence, aspects of this study's findings will inevitably be specific to the context of each particular organisation.

4.2 Who are the service users?

The process for recruiting service user interviewees into this study was set out in Section 3. This section of the report gives more detail about the circumstances of these service users and considers some implications for the practice and development of community chaplaincy.

All the service users interviewed for this study are men (a point discussed more fully in Section 3.2) and, as shown in Figure 4.1, the majority are white men. This reflects the wider population of clients at Futures Unlocked where, in 2016, 52 of the 55 new mentees were white British people. The position for WYCCP is different: a recent WYCCP diversity report showed that 201 of the 262 clients for whom data was available were white British and, therefore, white people are over-represented as research participants.

Ethnicity	White British	White Irish	Asian	Mixed
WYCCP	8	0	1	0
Futures Unlocked	7	1	1	1

Figure 4.1 Ethnicity of Service User Research Participants

WYCCP and Futures Unlocked service users are asked, at the point of assessment, whether faith is important in their lives. For the service users in this study, WYCCP recorded one person as a Muslim, two as 'Church of England' and six people as having no faith. Futures Unlocked recorded three people as having no faith and one person as Catholic. The records for the remaining Futures Unlocked six show faith as 'not known', suggesting that it was not identified as an important or relevant issue during the assessment process.

The age profile of the service user research participants is shown in Figure 4.2.

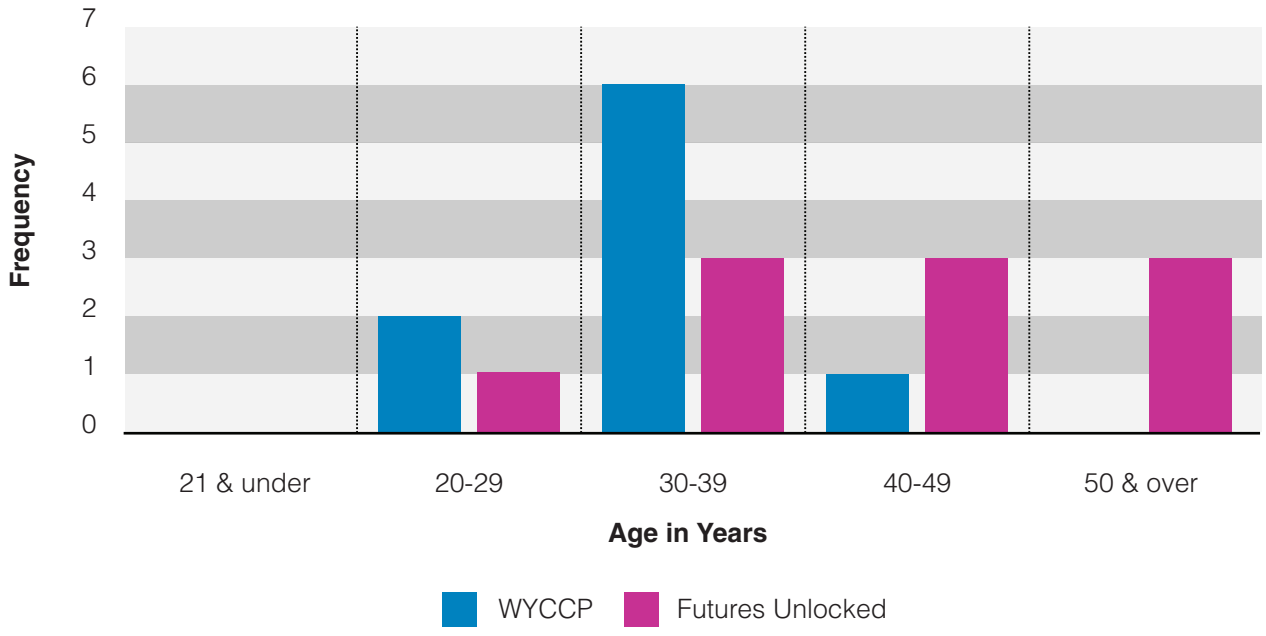

Figure 4.2: Service user age distribution

When compared with the prison population of England and Wales, children and young people are under-represented in this study. Prisoners under 30 make up 38% of the custodial population (House of Commons Library 2017), but only three out of 19 (just under 16%) of the service user research participants. Figures from the wider CCA network show that, in 2016, a significant proportion of male service users (43%) were under the age of 30.

The age profile of the service users sampled in this study reflects the nature of WYCCP and Futures Unlocked. WYCCP is linked with HMP Leeds, an adult prison not holding inmates under the age of 21. No

new Futures Unlocked mentee in 2016 was under the age of 25. At the other end of the age range, three research participants (all with Futures Unlocked) were aged 50 or over, in line with the 15% of the overall prison population that are in this age band. As Figure 4.2 makes clear, there is a difference in the age profile between the Futures Unlocked and WYCCP service users in the research sample. The average age of the nine WYCCP service users was 32.9 years; that of the ten Futures Unlocked clients was 44.8 years.

There is also a difference between the average length of prison sentence served by the Futures Unlocked and WYCCP service users participating in the study, with a greater proportion of the work of WYCCP being with prisoners serving shorter determinate sentences.

Sentence length	Community sentence	Custody less than 12 months	Custody more than 12 months
WYCCP	0	4	5
Futures Unlocked	1	1	8

Figure 4.3 Service User Sentence Length

The data displayed in Figure 4.3 come from records kept by the two community chaplaincies. The three categories (community sentence, custody less than 12 months and custody more than 12 months) are taken from the Futures Unlocked database. 'Custody more than 12 months' is a very broad category, extending from sentences that involve a few months in prison through to indeterminate sentences for public protection, and the sample of Futures Unlocked client interviewees included examples at both ends of this spectrum. Two of the Futures Unlocked clients over the age of 50 are men who had been released having served many years of indeterminate prison sentences for sex offences. Part of the difference in age profile between WYCCP and Futures Unlocked can be explained by the organisations' different decisions about providing a service to this group of offenders.

Figure 4.4 shows the spread of types of offences recorded as the most recent conviction for the service user research participants. These are broad categories; for example, the violent offences include domestic violence, assaults involving knives as well as robbery and attempted robbery.

Offence type	Violence (inc robbery)	Burglary and theft	Drugs	Sex	Child cruelty	Other
WYCCP	4	2	1	0	1	1
Futures Unlocked	5	2	0	2	0	1

Figure 4.4 Service user most recent offence type

Typically, the service users in this study have previous convictions too; in most cases, they have many previous convictions and have served previous prison sentences.

37% of prisoners reported needing help with accommodation for their release

It is well documented (see, for example, Prison Reform Trust 2016) that the social circumstances of people in prison are poor. Prisoners are more likely than the general population to experience problems with substance misuse and to be in poor health. 15% of the prison population were homeless before entering custody, and, in 2014, 37% of prisoners reported needing help with accommodation for their release.

This pattern of concern is evident in the group of service users interviewed for this study. Figure 4.5

shows the number of interviewees with concerns in the areas of alcohol, drugs, housing and health. The data displayed here comes from the initial assessments undertaken by WYCCP and Futures Unlocked supplemented by interview data in cases where a concern emerged after the completion of the initial assessment. Poor health is a wide-ranging category that incorporates physical health problems, conditions such as autism, and a variety of mental health problems. Poor health is not necessarily a greater problem for Futures Unlocked clients, the difference shown in Figure 4.5 may reflect a difference in assessment and recording.

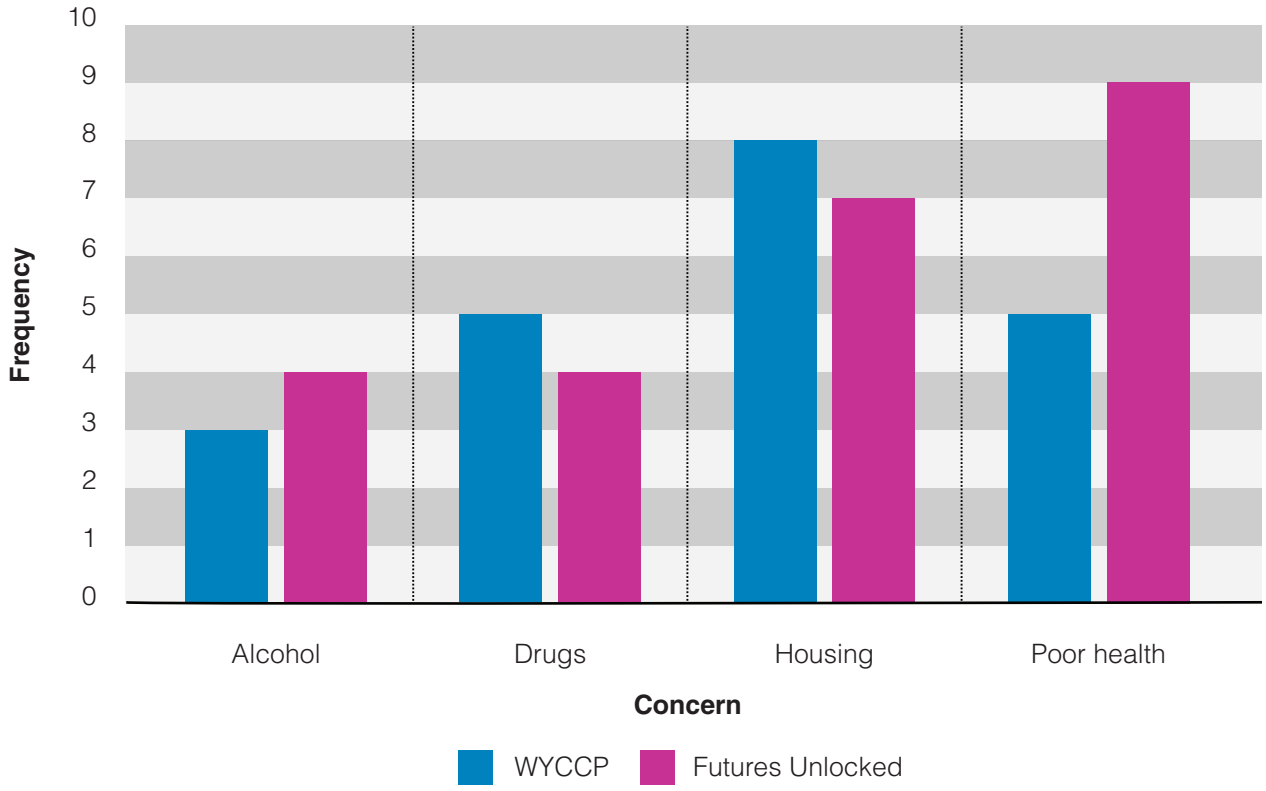

Figure 4.5 Service user concerns

Figure 4.5 makes clear that both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked are working with individuals with multiple and, for some, intractable problems. It provides strong evidence of the vulnerability of recently released prisoners and the obstacles that they face in the process of resettlement and desistance. Access to housing is a principal concern for people leaving prison, and the contribution of community chaplaincy to addressing this problem will be discussed further in Section 4.6.

The women service users who participated in the focus groups were asked whether they agreed that housing, drugs and alcohol were the biggest problems faced by people leaving prison. No-one disagreed about the significance of these problems, but the women were quick to add poor mental health and re-uniting with children to the list. These additions are congruent with findings about the needs of female service users from the evaluation of the Open Gate community chaplaincy (Barefoot 2015).

4.3 Staff and volunteers

This section focusses on the staff and volunteers who were interviewed for this study. It explores their motivation for involvement with community chaplaincy and the way in which they are linked or matched with particular service users.

Neither WYCCP nor Futures Unlocked requires staff or volunteers to practise a faith; the requirement is that people support the ethos of the organisation. Community chaplaincy trustees, responsible for staff recruitment, recognise the skills and gifts of people without personal faith but able to be open to the faith journeys of others. The staff interviewed for this study reflected this full range of approach to personal faith (the quotes that follow are not identified to allow anonymity in this small sample). One staff member explained seeing the job as part of faith, faith that informed everything in life. Another said, 'I felt God sent me here – if we're talking faithy.' By contrast, other workers made clear that they were not people of faith. For example 'It [chaplaincy] doesn't mean anything, we can work with anyone … Maybe it's different if you are religious, but I'm not religious, so …'

… staff valued the flexibility, freedom and avoidance of bureaucratic box-ticking that came with working for a small charity.

However, the staff members in this study were united in their enthusiasm for the work, their commitment to this client group and their belief that people deserved the opportunity to change. They came to community chaplaincy with relevant previous experience from work, life and study. For example, one worker learned of community chaplaincy while studying criminology and found 'a real passion for it – I one hundred per cent care about each guy that I work with – when they do well and succeed, it's lovely to see…. I do it 'cos I love doing it and I think that's why I'm successful, because I've got that passion.' Someone else said 'I was given a chance in life, I was adopted. That's had a massive effect on me'.

The staff also valued the flexibility, freedom and avoidance of bureaucratic box-ticking that came with working for a small charity. One contrasted her experience at the community chaplaincy with that in her previous job for an organisation concerned about 'being seen' to provide a service. She explained that, in her current role, she was motivated by 'seeing it actually working'.

The volunteers in this study identified similar reasons for getting involved with community chaplaincy. All were interested in ex-offenders and people coming out of prison; all wanted to offer help. For some volunteers, this commitment came from personal experience. K14v explained that his 'need' to do this work came from family experience of imprisonment. J17v talked of his own past history of offending and his desire to 'give something back' and carry 'a powerful message' about the possibility of change.

For five (of eight) volunteers interviewed for this study, personal faith was part of the motivation for their involvement with the organisation. K16v, a practising Christian, explained that she initially learned of community chaplaincy through her church but that her decision to volunteer came because 'this is something I care about and want to do' rather than as a direct consequence of her faith. J15v said that he was not sure how much difference his faith made to his volunteering.

Some volunteers are motivated by the opportunity to gain skills and experience, particularly with a view to future paid employment. Both Futures Unlocked and WYCCP recruited student volunteers from local university criminology courses. Three volunteer interviewees came to community chaplaincy to gain experience alongside their studies. One of the three was additionally motivated by her religious faith, describing the faith dimension of the organisation as 'probably the reason why I volunteered'. Motivation to volunteer is multi-faceted: a combination of altruism, interest in crime and offending, a desire for personal and professional development, and (for some) an expression of personal faith.

The two community chaplaincies vary in the way that volunteers work with service users. WYCCP deploys volunteers as link workers to support the work of resettlement workers. Futures Unlocked volunteers take on the mentoring role, in most cases acting as the principal point of contact with the clients.

The issue of recruiting and maintaining a diverse group of capable volunteers arose for both community chaplaincies. While the majority of Futures Unlocked mentees are men, the majority of volunteer mentors are women. Futures Unlocked staff felt that both men and women can work well as mentors for male clients, and that it was almost always possible to make an appropriate mentor/mentee match. That said, the relative lack of male mentors in the 30-45 age group was identified as a gap.

Volunteers can be hard to retain; community chaplaincy staff accepted that many would inevitably move on as a result of work opportunities, study and family commitments. J12s talked of the importance of not letting service users down. K11s acknowledged that student mentors could be effective and hard-working but others, 'only doing it for the cv', moved on too quickly. WYCCP employed part-time staff with responsibility for running the volunteer programme. Futures Unlocked no longer had a dedicated volunteer co-ordinator, with this work being shared among remaining team members.

Making the transition from prison to the community is often a difficult process. The joy and anticipation of freedom are easily overwhelmed by the reality of financial hardship, practical problems and fragile relationships.

Community chaplaincy staff are responsible for allocating volunteers to service users; making a match based on their assessment of the client and their knowledge of individuals in the pool of active and available volunteers. Staff talked about the importance of the matching process and expressed confidence in their ability to do this well. K12s explained that his first question to a client was 'who do you want to work with?' J10s explained that he had usually been working with a service user for two or three months at the point a link worker was allocated, so made the match partly on practical grounds (transport and location) but also on the personal attributes of both individuals.

There were volunteers at both community chaplaincies with a lived experience of criminal conviction and imprisonment. Neither organisation prioritised ex-offender volunteers, stressing that aptitude for and interest in the work were the most important factors.

Both organisations saw the contribution made by volunteers as a distinctive feature of community chaplaincy, building genuine community links for service users and greatly extending the service that could be provided by paid staff alone.

4.4 Community chaplaincy and prison

The link between community chaplaincy and prison is important but complicated. As outlined in Section 2, much of the impetus for the development of community chaplaincy came from a desire from within prison, and particularly from within prison chaplaincy, to find a way of continuing inclusive faith-based support to prisoners after their release. However, each community chaplaincy organisation has a distinctive relationship with its local (and not so local) prisons.

Making the transition from prison to the community is often a difficult process. The joy and anticipation of freedom are easily overwhelmed by the reality of financial hardship, practical problems and fragile relationships. The lack of continuity of services and support from prison into the community has long been identified as a problem; prisoners may begin treatment for health or substance use problems, start education or training programmes, or get involved with faith and worship only to find that there is no way to keep going on release. While people leave prison with varying motivation to stay out of trouble, many

would-be desisters become derailed (Halsey et al 2017) by lack of resources and lack of support. As discussed in Section 2.1 one of the official aims of the Transforming Rehabilitation reform was to improve the 'through-the gate' work of the prison and probation service. The policy particularly encouraged the practice of deploying volunteer mentors to meet individuals at the prison on their day of release and then support them through the next few days.

This section of the report discusses the relationship between community chaplaincy and prison, including the work of community chaplaincy inside, through-the-gate and post-release.

All community chaplaincies have a presence inside prison. Some community chaplaincies are sufficiently integrated into the prison for staff to have prison service email addresses and be identified as part of chaplaincy teams. Other community chaplaincies are more closely identified with the voluntary sector, part of the network of agencies delivering services inside. A third group of community chaplaincies, least involved with the prison, operate as regular visitors.

WYCCP and Futures Unlocked employ staff who are prison key-holders, often working inside the prison aiming to identify prisoners who would benefit from community chaplaincy, and assessing those referred (either by other agencies or as self-referrals). As noted earlier, the big difference between the two is that WYCCP is located next door to HMP Leeds, and Futures Unlocked is at a distance from Warwickshire's two main resettlement prisons (and provides a service to Warwickshire residents held in prisons across the country).

One finding from this study is that service users made their link with the community chaplaincy in a variety of ways. Many interviewees had been involved with community chaplaincy in the past: four (of nine) WYCCP interviewees and three (of ten) at Futures Unlocked had previously been supported by the organisation, and their decision to be re-referred was based on this previous experience. J9c is an example of a community chaplaincy regular. He explained that he had served numerous prison sentences and had worked with the organisation 'on and off….well to be honest….constantly'.

Other service users did hear about the organisation, for the first time, while serving their most recent sentence. J6c saw posters about WYCCP and put in an application to see the resettlement worker. K10c described how he saw an advert for the through the gate mentoring service (delivered by Futures Unlocked as part of the contract with the CRC) and a member of prison staff arranged for him to be assessed by the community chaplain. Recommendation from other prisoners was important too. J2c, who knew he was going to need help on leaving prison, explained that a fellow prisoner told him that WYCCP was 'really good – they'll really help you.' K1c was in prison some considerable distance from Warwickshire. His link with Futures Unlocked began with a referral from his home probation officer[4] (from the NPS), which led to the community chaplain coming to visit him in the prison.

A final group of service users did not get involved with community chaplaincy until after their release from prison. J7c was unique among the WYCCP interviewees in this respect. He had returned to live in West Yorkshire having served his sentence elsewhere, and was put in touch with WYCCP by a family member who knew of the organisation.

It was much more usual for Futures Unlocked clients to get involved with the organisation after release, in part because they had been in prison away from Warwickshire. That said, there were also examples of people who had been in local prisons and not come across the organisation. K6c explained that he had not found out about the organisation while inside because 'I'm not religious, so I didn't have anything to do with the chaplaincy' (although being involved with prison chaplaincy is not key to the Futures Unlocked referral process).

The probation service (both the NPS and the CRC) was also responsible for a significant proportion of Futures Unlocked referrals, the majority of them being made post-release. Five (of ten) Futures Unlocked interviewees were referred in this way. Four of these men were living in one of the two Warwickshire approved premises (AP) when they heard about Futures Unlocked. For example, K3c explained that his probation officer and staff at the AP introduced Futures Unlocked as able to provide additional practical help. K7c also heard about Futures Unlocked while resident at the AP. He did not go ahead with a

4 The home probation officer is the probation officer based in the area where the prisoner will return on release. The home probation officer must agree the prisoner's release plan, and is responsible for supervising the post-custody licence.

referral at that point, but some months after he had left the AP he found himself facing homelessness. Desperate, he remembered Futures Unlocked and telephoned the community chaplain to ask 'what can you do for me?'

K5c provides the most informal example of self-referral to community chaplaincy. K5c had been mentored by Futures Unlocked in the past. He had got into more trouble and had received a community sentence. He felt that he was struggling to cope and needed to get back into a purposeful routine. His re-engagement with Future Unlocked came as a result of coming across the community chaplain in the street and stopping to talk.

To summarise, there is no single way in which service users engage with community chaplaincy. Prison links are important, but will inevitably look different across the community chaplaincy network. The majority of WYCCP service users got involved with their resettlement worker while they were still in prison; the position in Futures Unlocked was different with the majority of first meetings (seven of the ten in this group) with community chaplains and mentors taking place after release. Probation (and AP) links are important too although (as discussed further in Section 4.12) these links are shaped and constrained by the contractual arrangements between voluntary and statutory sectors. Successful and productive community chaplaincy may begin while the individual is a serving prisoner, but supporting someone through the gate is neither necessary nor sufficient for meaningful work.

Service users may come to community chaplaincy by a number of routes, but they share a bleak experience of life after prison. The data gathered for this study, from interviews with staff and volunteers as well as service users, contains much evidence of the practical and psychological problems faced by people attempting to re-establish themselves in the community. Community chaplaincy organisations are working with people who would otherwise be existing with few material resources and little human companionship.

… there is no single way in which service users engage with community chaplaincy

Service users gave the example of immediate practical help with essentials such as food and clothing. As K3c said 'It's just the basics – you come out of prison and you've got nothing.' K4c made the same point 'If it wasn't for organisations like Futures Unlocked, a lot of the lads would get nothing. We'd be fucked. We really would.' Volunteers and staff also stressed the impoverished position, and structural disadvantage, of many people on release from custody. K13s described Futures Unlocked as dealing with the problems of austerity.

J2c spoke of the importance of the human contact. 'At the moment having the more people around me…. helps me keep focussed….stops my mind running wild which is when I get into trouble.' K2c judged that if his probation officer had not put him in touch with Futures Unlocked 'I'd have no-one'. K7c vividly described the vulnerable and confused position of people leaving custody, saying that when you come out of prison 'your head's up your arse'.

Women service users made similar points about the challenge of readjusting to life in the community after prison, and the speed with which a positive mindset crumbled in the face of lack of resources and an absence of support.

4.5 Community chaplaincy and practical help

For the majority of service users in the study, the prospect of receiving practical help was the initial hook for engagement with community chaplaincy. Help with housing was such a key theme in the study that it is dealt with separately in Section 4.6. Section 4.7 then considers the experience of receiving a service from a faith-based organisation.

Service users gave a wide variety of examples of the practical help that they had received from staff and volunteers and, significantly, frequently asserted that this was help that could not be obtained elsewhere. Help received from WYCCP and Futures Unlocked included food and clothing, money for emergencies, household items and furniture, items for work and leisure, and assistance with money management and budgeting.

Help with basic needs such as food and clothing was most commonly provided immediately on release from prison, but the study also included examples of people requiring help of this sort some months later. For example, K7c had a road accident and was unable to work for a period of time. Futures Unlocked provided him with vouchers to take to the foodbank. K2c moved into privately rented accommodation a few months after leaving prison. All his wages that month went on fees, deposit and rent. Futures Unlocked provided him with a small grant to pay for bedding and some food. Without this money, K2c would 'have been sleeping on a mattress in my coat for a couple of weeks.'

Many service user interviewees gave examples of receiving help to obtain household items to furnish newly acquired accommodation. In some cases, these items come from donations made to community chaplaincy organisations. In other cases, community chaplaincies link service users to local charities that help in this way. For example, with the help of WYCCP and other charities, J1c gradually added to the furniture in his rented flat so that, by the time of the third research interview, he was able to have his young children stay overnight.

K9c's mentor at Futures Unlocked was able to find him an old bike so that he could attend appointments and look for work. She also got him a second-hand games console when he explained that he was struggling because he was getting bored easily.

A great deal of community chaplaincy staff and volunteer time is spent accompanying people to appointments, managing money and securing benefits. Examples from the fieldwork include supporting people at appointments with dentists, drugs agencies, appeals about benefits, and meetings with building society staff. J4c was supported by WYCCP (support which included accompanying him to appointments) to obtain dental treatment to remove damaged teeth and fit new false teeth. His resettlement worker commented on the benefit of this treatment to his appearance and his confidence, noting that J4c had been too scared of the process to undertake this without help.

Given the poor health of many service users, staff and volunteers often assisted with claims for disability benefits and dealt with appeals when claims were refused. Service users sometimes needed help with reading and understanding the forms, but help with managing the stress and frustration of dealing with statutory agencies was just as important. J15v explained that J9c coped badly if he attended formal meetings on his own. By contrast, if accompanied by the community chaplaincy volunteer, even if the volunteer provided minimal input, J9c 'relaxes' and 'handles himself quite well.'

Identification documents are required for many bureaucratic and business transactions; people leaving prison often lack this, do not have a recent history of, for example, utility bills, and have often lost pre-prison paperwork. A number of service users in this study received help to obtain new documents. K15v spent, in her words, 'inordinate time' helping K1c sort out his finances. K1c, an older man who had spent many years in prison, had money trapped in now dormant bank accounts. K15v, drawing on her experience from this and other similar cases, was critical of the attitude of banks and building societies to ex-offenders. She described them as 'able but unwilling' to provide a service to former prisoners.

From a service user perspective, J1c (who had worked in prison as a peer advisor) talked about the difficulty he had faced in opening a bank account and establishing an 'electronic footprint'. He recommended that more be done to allow people in prison to prepare for release by assembling identity documents and opening bank accounts.

Women service users also appreciated the practical help that they received from community chaplaincy and valued the knowledge that volunteers and staff had about local voluntary organisations and charities. They also explained how beneficial it was to have someone alongside them at difficult appointments (including meetings and court cases about the care of children).

4.6 Housing

Lack of housing was the most common practical problem faced by the service users in this study, and a topic that consumed a great deal of staff time and effort. As Figure 4.5 shows, housing was a concern for almost every service user. Two service users (including the person subject to the community sentence) had their own tenancies and two others were living in satisfactory circumstances with family members. Everyone else was either inadequately housed, in temporary accommodation (including the APs) or not housed at all at the point that they contacted community chaplaincy. In many cases, it was precisely because of this need that they went ahead with the community chaplaincy referral.

One positive finding from this study is that the majority of service users saw some improvement in their housing position during their time with community chaplaincy. Some people moved from being homeless to obtaining temporary shared accommodation, others moved from shared accommodation or an AP, to a place of their own.

For WYCCP in this study, much practical housing work involved joint work with other agencies and supporting service users at meetings with the local authority. For example, J4c was homeless and sofa-surfing on release from prison. The WYCCP resettlement worker linked with a specialist housing agency and (through the research period) J4c moved from homelessness to shared housing and then a flat. Similarly, J2c was released from prison without accommodation. With the support of WYCCP, a housing agency and a drug treatment service he was soon (and by the time of the first research interview) in temporary accommodation. He was still in this accommodation at the time of the second research

interview, surprised and grateful for the help that WYCCP had given him to settle in. Either directly, or by linking him with other charities, WYCCP had helped J2c obtain plates, pots, pans and clothing. There was no third research interview with J2c, he was no longer in contact with WYCCP and did not respond to the researcher.

Housing was a main focus of work for Futures Unlocked too. K7c was the person (see Section 4.4) who telephoned Futures Unlocked in a housing crisis. At the point of the first research interview he was staying with a family member, sleeping on the sofa and aware that he would have to leave in a few weeks. He had met the community chaplain on five or six occasions and recently been matched with a mentor. He knew that a number of housing referrals had been made, but there was, as yet, no outcome from these. He explained that he had got 'not a lot….nothing concrete' from his contact with Futures Unlocked so far, but was confident that people were working on his behalf. By the time of the second research interview, K7c had moved into a privately-rented flat. Crucially Futures Unlocked, drawing on community contacts, helped him secure a £800 loan that (together with some financial help from a relative) enabled him to pay the deposit and rent in advance. At the time of the third interview, K7c was maintaining this tenancy despite some struggles with managing paperwork and paying bills. He had yet to begin to repay the loan. When asked what he had got from his involvement with Futures Unlocked he said 'my flat…. nobody else helped with that.'

Community chaplaincy staff and volunteers spoke with frustration about the extent of the accommodation problems faced by people leaving prison …

The picture is, though, not wholly optimistic. Some service users suffered housing set-backs as a result of committing further offences or being recalled to prison for other reasons. At the time of K3c's first research interview he was living in an AP. Initially, on release from prison, he had gone to live with a friend, but this arrangement was not approved by his probation supervisor who required him to take the place at the AP. K3c's priority was to find move-on accommodation and he expressed frustration about the lack of progress that he felt he was making. He hoped that Futures Unlocked would be able to provide a 'little bit of help that I can't get from anywhere else.' However, K3c was not to move-on from the AP, as he was recalled to prison for further offending soon after the first research interview.

For other service user interviewees, housing problems proved intractable for other reasons. K1c was living in an AP at the time of the first research interview (soon after his release from prison) and remained there at the end of the research period some six months later. His mentor, K15v, explained that he was in a 'housing catch 22': the police and probation services wanted him housed in supported accommodation to manage his perceived risk, but no supported housing provider would accept him exactly because of this risk. By the time of the third research interview, K1c described the AP as 'depressing and driving me mad'. His mentor was of the opinion that it was 'exceptional' that K1c had complied with the AP regime for so long.

Community chaplaincy staff and volunteers spoke with frustration about the extent of the accommodation problems faced by people leaving prison, about the ineffective nature of much of the housing help received by prisoners, and about housing policies and procedures that systematically disadvantaged service users. K13s described the existing system as 'completely broken'. She went on to say 'I'm not buying tents because I'm a tent enthusiast. I'm buying tents because people are being released homeless.' K8c, who had been provided with a tent by the community chaplaincy said that, while living in a tent was not great, 'if it weren't for Futures Unlocked, I'd have had no shelter.'

J15v noted the way that housing benefit rules prevent people under the age of 35 (with some exceptions) from securing anything other than shared accommodation. He identified this as a particular problem for people leaving prison subject to licence conditions that required them to move away from their immediate home area and the option of living with family and friends.

Staff and volunteers argued that there should be greater awareness among policy makers and the general public about the reality of life on release from prison. K11s explained that when he gave talks to community groups about the work of community chaplaincy he found an absence of knowledge about the problems faced by ex-prisoners in areas including housing. K11s felt that there was a message that needed to get across to people with power and influence.

Neither Futures Unlocked nor WYCCP directly provides housing. There are community chaplaincy organisations that manage properties which are let to service users, and the community chaplains and resettlement workers in this study could see both the appeal and the difficulties of this. J10s identified providing housing as something that could be done if the community chaplaincy had more money. K12s made a similar point about money, wondering whether a church would be able to help with financing. This would have similarities with the model operated by the organisation Hope into Action (see Figure 3.1). K12s offered the view that providing housing would be 'hard to achieve, but would make a big difference'.

Housing was no less an issue for the women who participated in the focus groups. Two of the women in the Northampton group were now living in a house managed by the community chaplaincy. One woman in the St Austell group would have found herself homeless soon after her release from prison if she had not found accommodation in a church-run housing project.

4.7 Receiving a service: the significance of faith

The history and development of community chaplaincy as a faith-based endeavour was briefly set out in Section 2.1. This section explores the experience, for clients, of receiving a service from a faith-based organisation.

The evidence from this study is that the CCA policy to avoid zealous outreach was achieved in practice and the chaplaincy service was delivered inclusively. No interviewee felt that the faith-based nature of community chaplaincy had led to evangelism, nor did anyone indicate that the quality of the service varied with the faith position of the client. On the contrary, community chaplains reassured service users that they 'didn't have to practise a religion' (K4c). Service users did not feel that anything had been 'pushed' on them (J1c) or 'rammed down' their throats (J2c).

Not all service user interviewees were aware of the faith-based nature of community chaplaincy, despite the fact that WYCCP has 'community chaplaincy' in its name and Futures Unlocked has employees called community chaplains. J8c said 'I don't see it as religious.' Of those clients that were aware of the faith-base, some viewed this as a point of little importance. K5c thought that community chaplaincy might be 'a Methodist thing' because his mentor was something to do with the Boys' Brigade. Other interviewees explained that they were comfortable with the idea of faith-based provision because of past experiences of involvement in church life.

However it is important to note that, for a minority of interviewees, the faith-based nature of community chaplaincy was a problem. For example, K2c (now aged 60) explained that his bad feelings about religion dated back to his time as a child in residential care. He had resolved never to be involved with religion but said that he was reassured when the community chaplain said that 'he was not really a chaplain'. Staff and volunteers did understand that, for some service users, the idea of chaplaincy could be an obstacle to accessing the service. J13s explained that the service user advisory group had raised this issue, suggesting that prisoners would not want to see the 'God-botherers'. She went on to say 'as soon as they start talking to us they realise that's not what it's about'. K17v made a similar point, 'This may scare people away from reaching out for help they need – but, on the other hand, may draw other people in.'

Service users divided into two groups: 12 (of 19) thought the faith-based nature of the organisation did not affect the service delivered and seven (of 19) argued that this ethos improved the work. Interviewees who felt that a faith-based service could be a better service argued on the basis that religious people would be motivated to do good, 'have a good heart' (K3c) and be caring. J2c summed up this line

of reasoning when he said 'To be honest with it being connected with the church, you'd expect….no pressure…. they're there 'cos they want to help'.

J2c was not the only service user to make a link with the Christian faith, other service users made reference to Christian attitudes or to their childhood experiences of church. By contrast, the multi-faith nature of community chaplaincy was important to other service users, including the two Asian service user interviewees (neither of whom reported practising a religion themselves). K10c said that the multi-faith nature of Futures Unlocked showed the recognition that it is not just one group or one culture that needs help.

The CCA positioning paper Community Chaplaincy and Faith (CCA 2011) commits member organisations to responding to those who wish to explore and develop their faith. Futures Unlocked explicitly include faith as one of the pathways on which a client may wish to work with their mentor (see Section 3.3). For the sample of service users in this study, at the initial assessment stage, faith was rated green (meaning not an issue or concern) for eight (of ten) individuals and rated amber (some issue) for the other two. No service user, in the research interviews, talked about using their mentoring sessions to explore and develop faith.

The Futures Unlocked mentor interviewees did talk about the faith pathway. K14v explained that community chaplaincy could meet clients' faith needs by introducing them to a church or by discussing personal experience of faith. However, he added that most clients have no interest in faith. K15v, mentoring one of the client research participants rated as amber on the faith pathway, described how initially the client seemed to be interested in investigating faith and church attendance. He did not follow through with her encouragement of this and, on reflection, K15v concluded that, at the start, the client was trying to do what he thought Futures Unlocked wanted. As he came to know and trust his mentor, it became possible for him to be honest about his intentions.

Community chaplaincy staff were universally clear about the importance of being honest and straightforward about the help that could be offered to service users.

Similarly, WYCCP works in a way that enables faith to be on the agenda for service users. As one of the resettlement workers explained, asking a question about faith at the assessment stage allows time for people to talk about spiritual ideas and concerns, issues that some people reflect on while in custody. On a practical level, WYCCP would also aim to link service users with faith communities if this request was made. J11s said 'If someone is of faith I'll do everything I can to put them in touch….only if they ask for it.' As with the sample of Futures Unlocked service users, faith was not an area of intervention for any of the WYCCP service users in this study.

The experiences and views expressed at the women's focus groups were similar to those of the interviewees from Futures Unlocked and WYCCP; the women service users were clear that the faith-base of community chaplaincy did not lead to preaching or pressure to be religious. One woman, who felt judged and excluded from her church congregation as a result of her imprisonment, praised the spiritual support available from community chaplaincy.

To conclude these sections on the theme of service delivery, community chaplaincy organisations provide practical help (particularly practical help in the face of likely homelessness) that service users value and believe is not forthcoming from elsewhere. The possibility of receiving practical help is the reason that service users get involved. However, the service users interviewed for this study also had a great deal to say about the way that this help was offered and provided. The following sections of the report explore the ethos of community chaplaincy and the relationships that underpin this.

4.8 The community chaplaincy ethos

This study suggests that a number of themes (identified by service users, staff and volunteers) come together to create a distinctive community chaplaincy ethos. These themes include honesty, genuineness, persistence and care.

Community chaplaincy staff were universally clear about the importance of being honest and straightforward about the help that could be offered to service users. They stressed the need for integrity, for doing what they said they would do, and the importance of not making promises that could not be kept. For example, J10s said 'The only thing we promise is to do our best'. K13s explained that she wanted to provide something genuine with integrity and aimed to 'under promise and over deliver'. For her, treating clients with respect required high standards of honesty.

Service user interviewees also identified honesty and genuineness as important qualities of community chaplaincy. K4c said of his mentor and community chaplain 'they're calm, they're genuine, they're honest, they're sympathetic and they listen'. J5c made a similar comment, describing community chaplaincy people as 'good, genuine, listen, good advice.' J1c explained that WYCCP showed a genuine interest in him.

Persistence was another theme that emerged in the research. Community chaplaincy persisted with people and with problems. As set out in Section 4.4, seven (of 19) service user interviewees had been previously involved with the organisation. Futures Unlocked and WYCCP were happy to keep offering the service regardless of previous setbacks, understanding ambivalence and fluctuating motivation to be part of human nature. J13s said 'We give people a second chance – or third or fourth'. The organisation will work with people 'as long as is meaningful'.

Service users also appreciated the way that community chaplaincy persisted with problems, contrasting this with the response received from some other agencies. J1c explained that, while in prison, he was motivated to make changes and improve his circumstances but sceptical that any agency or charity would be able to help 'I never believed in services….I've dealt with many services.' He was impressed with WYCCP because the 'organisation got my number, they carried on, didn't give up…. I spoke to them.' At his third interview, looking back at his time with Futures Unlocked, K9c praised the service that he had received from his mentor, 'everything I've asked of her, she's helped.' One woman focus group member explained that community chaplaincy people did not know the word quit.

Service users felt that the care and concern expressed by community chaplaincy was authentic. For example, WYCCP service users spoke of the way that they were recognised and welcomed when they called into the office. J4c, by the time of his third interview, had got into the habit of going to the office most days. He then, without telling WYCCP, went to visit a family member for a few days. Staff at WYCCP were worried by his absence and contacted the police and hospital. This level of concern was much appreciated by J4c. He said it 'just shows that they do really care'. He contrasted this with a lack of interest from his family when he failed to contact them.

Futures Unlocked clients made similar comments about the quality of community chaplaincy. K4c described his mentor as someone who cared, who knew what he was talking about, as 'spot on', and as someone who 'genuinely gave a crap.' Only a couple of Futures Unlocked service users had visited the office and café in Rugby, but both men viewed this positively as a source of help and support. K2c described the office and café as a 'nice set-up'; having visited once he would now feel able to phone in the future and talk to any member of staff, not just his community chaplain.

K2c made his first visit to the Futures Unlocked building because he had been asked to contribute to training for new mentors, giving a service user perspective. He described this experience as nerve-racking, but explained that he had been pleased to help Futures Unlocked in this way. His community chaplain, K12s, reflected in his interview on K2c's contribution to the training event, using this as an illustration of K2c's gain in confidence since his release from prison.

K2c's willingness to do something helpful for Futures Unlocked also highlights the mutual and shared nature of care in community chaplaincy. Service users experienced authentic concern and respect, and responded by wanting to reciprocate. J4c's contribution was to do some gardening at the WYCCP office. K5c, a second time Futures Unlocked client, did not want to 'end up like last time' when he 'let people down'.

Faith makes an elusive but significant contribution to the community chaplaincy ethos. Service users, volunteers and staff with little or no interest in religion were able to be involved with the community chaplaincies and supportive of the organisational values, while holding the view that it would make no difference to the service delivered if the organisation was secular. However, for other interviewees, faith was central to the concept and history of community chaplaincy. From this point of view, asking about secular community chaplaincy simply made no sense. Faith is 'always there – unspoken but ubiquitous' (K13s). K13s went on to explain that this shaped the values of the organisation; it was 'based in faith, not in profit'.

The community chaplaincy values identified in this section – values like authentic care and recognising people's intrinsic worth – are not exclusively associated with faith, but they are at the ethical heart of religion. They provide a foundation for community chaplaincy that provides stability in the face of changes in statutory (and secular) priorities and policies.

For service users and staff, the community chaplaincy ethos is expressed in personal relationships, and the nature of these relationships is explored in more detail in the next section.

4.9 Community chaplaincy and relationships

Community chaplaincy depends on the network of relationships between service users, staff and volunteers. For Futures Unlocked, the primary relationship is between client and volunteer mentor, with oversight provided by the community chaplain. For WYCCP, each service user works with a resettlement worker often (but not always) with additional input from a volunteer link worker.

Many community chaplaincy relationships are short-lived; individuals make contact with the organisation but their involvement does not extend beyond a first meeting or pick up from the prison gate. All the service users who participated in this study had at least a brief relationship with community chaplaincy staff, although in three (of 19) cases the link with the organisation ended shortly after the first research interview. For the majority of service users in this study, their relationship with community chaplaincy staff and volunteers developed over a number of months.

Service users (both men and women) were almost universally positive about the quality of community chaplaincy relationships, whether these were with staff or with volunteers. Staff and volunteers were praised for being easy to talk to, down to earth, patient, and good company. Service users had a sense that people had time for them: both enough time at each meeting to deal with complicated problems and also sufficient flexibility to continue to be involved for the time it took to make progress with difficult issues.

Service users drew parallels between community chaplaincy and friendship. The word friendly was often used to describe staff and volunteers; service users found warmth, humour, trust and welcome in their relationship with community chaplaincy. A couple of service users went further and explained that their relationship was like a friendship. For example, when asked (at the time of his third interview) what he had got from his contact with Futures Unlocked, K1c said 'friendship more than anything'. J3c also commented 'I feel like I've got a friend – can trust them'.

Women service users spoke of workers who 'talk to you like friends' and of relationships that are 'like a sister, a friend'.

By contrast, staff stressed that the community chaplaincy relationship was not a friendship. K17v sought to explain the distance between mentoring and friendship, describing mentoring as 'a two-way

relationship – three steps off being friends.' J12s offered the opinion that it was OK for service users to see her as a friend, so long as they were clear that this was a 'professional friendship' with boundaries. K11s saw mentoring as time-limited and focussed on meeting objectives. 'As time goes on, the risk is you become friends.' His colleague, K12s made a similar point: 'The mentoring relationship should end when it's just meeting up for coffee and you're not getting much done. When Futures Unlocked is just a friendly face in the community'.

It is worth setting this comment from K12s alongside the evidence from many service user interviewees that 'just meeting up for coffee' was an extremely supportive and helpful aspect of community chaplaincy. In a life offering little social interaction lived in the bleak environment of a bedsit or hostel, the opportunity to meet for a chat and a drink was something to look forward to and a means of sustaining motivation. K4c liked meeting his mentor at a café. 'It's neutral ground, it's something nice, it gets you out. It's good to have coffee and chat.' J9c said of his relationship with people at WYCCP that he knew that, even if he did not have a problem, he was 'always welcome' to go to the office and have a coffee. K7c (at his final interview) explained that he used his café meetings with his mentor to 'get things off his chest', reducing the chance that he would lose his temper and get into trouble.

The boundaries that shape community chaplaincy relationships, and the way that these relationships come to an end are explored in more detail in Section 4.11

4.10 Community chaplaincy: a hook for change?

This section considers ways in which, from the perspective of the client, the work done by community chaplaincy (through relationships as well as by the provision of practical assistance) helps with the process of change.

Service users are not compelled to engage with community chaplaincy, but (as described in Section 4.5) get involved in the hope of receiving help with pressing practical problems. Some are also seeking to make changes and improve the quality of their life, for example by drinking less alcohol, living a more settled life and avoiding a return to prison.

Service user interviewees agreed that motivation and commitment to change had to come from the individual. Community chaplaincy did not change people; people had to do this themselves. J1c said 'For me, I personally believe you need to self-motivate – you've got to want to change.'

That said, this study suggests that community chaplaincy provides a framework that can enable and support this process of change. The service provided by community chaplaincy is very personal, authentic two-way relationships create a firm base for change, and the process of mentoring encourages self-efficacy.

Both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked offered a genuinely individualised service, delivered at the service user's pace. K2c summed up community chaplaincy as 'on your terms, about your choices, what you want to do'. J3c said that his resettlement worker 'plants a seed' but 'doesn't push'. J1c explained that, at his first meeting after release from prison, he and the community chaplain sat down over a cup of coffee, talked about how J1c was getting on and what he needed, and shared ideas about what to do next. Staff and volunteers all made the point that the content of their work varied with the wishes and needs of the service user. K12s said that the 'work depends on the client – their need.' J11s explained that the plan made with service users varies because 'they're different people with different problems and issues.'

The quality of community chaplaincy relationships (as described in the previous section) was one reason why service users maintained contact with the organisation and persisted through difficult times. At the time of his third interview, J4c spoke of the encouragement that he received from community chaplaincy. He particularly valued the opportunity to talk with people about 'difficult stuff'. He explained that this sort of conversation helped him progress through periods of depression. K1c, also in his third interview, described how his relationship with his mentor had given him a sense that 'someone is there for me.'

He went on to say 'I was grateful for the support – it gave me hope.' J12s, from a staff perspective, observed that once a trusting relationship was built, clients were worried about letting their resettlement worker down.

The women focus group participants made similar comments about the quality of the relationships that they built with community chaplaincy people. They used similar language, offering words like caring, loving and very encouraging to describe staff and volunteers. They explained that staff and volunteers were good at listening, willing to trust and not judgemental. Community chaplaincy people were good at steering and advising, they were 'someone in your corner'.

The community chaplaincy practice evident in this study encouraged service users to do things for themselves while recognising, for some people in some circumstances, it was appropriate for staff and volunteers to take the lead. In this sense, community chaplaincy provided a scaffolding framework, which could be gradually withdrawn as service users grew in confidence. K12s talked about the coaching element of mentoring, giving the example of teaching people to use the computers in public libraries. 'We try to make it all client led. We're not babysitting – the client needs to do stuff.' From the client's perspective K2c, at his third interview and commenting specifically on the help that his mentor had given him with budgeting, said that the impact of mentoring was to 'put the person on a secure footing.' K9c stressed that he expected to do things for himself, with the help of Futures Unlocked if needed.

Staff and volunteers also talked about finding the right balance between doing things for people and supporting them to do things for themselves. J11s spoke about accompanying a service user (a man with mild learning disabilities) to a benefits assessment; he explained that he initially did not speak, but intervened after some minutes to challenge the assessor's inappropriate questions and curt tone. K11s, reflecting on working with a man he described as a 'very needy character', suggested that progress had been made as the client was now better able to cope and less likely to expect things to be done for him.

At the third interview stage, service users looked back with appreciation at the framework provided by their relationship with mentors and resettlement workers. J8c explained that WYCCP had helped him settle into the community and stay out of trouble, 'they point me in the right direction'. Similarly, K9c credited conversations with his mentor for stopping him 'falling back into old ways'. Of Futures Unlocked, he said 'They've given me quite a lot. I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for them.'

4.11 Relationships: boundaries and endings

Both Futures Unlocked and WYCCP had procedures governing the contact that service users had with staff and volunteers. These procedures covered issues such as the location of meetings, arrangements for the use of volunteers' cars, the use of mobile telephones and the disclosure of personal information. These policies, and the reasons for them, were communicated to new volunteers during initial training. The two community chaplaincies had slightly different expectations, reflecting their different operating models. Futures Unlocked, for example, equipped mentors with a 'work' mobile phone. WYCCP volunteer link workers did not give a mobile phone number to service users.

Individual staff and volunteers did, however, interpret policy in different ways. Some were more inclined than others to see boundaries as potentially malleable. J15v (a volunteer with more than five years' experience) acknowledged that he was poor at following procedures, for example he said he regularly neglected to phone the WYCCP office at the start and end of his meetings with service users. However, he explained that he was patient when service users missed appointments and able to be flexible about the length and the location of his meetings.

Other volunteers were less happy (and less able) to be in contact with service users outside of previously agreed times. K18v felt that one of her mentees was continually over-stepping boundaries: he would try and phone in the evenings, had suggested they went bowling, and asked her questions about her weekend. She observed that he 'just wanted to talk.' K18v described mentoring as an opportunity to work through problems and achieve objectives. For her, it was not a 'befriending service.'

The service users interviewed in this study knew that their access to and relationship with community chaplaincy was boundaried. However, they appreciated the informality of the relationships and the sense that people had time for them. J8c said WYCCP is like 'friends – there's boundaries but not so many, you can have a laugh and a joke'.

In contrast to the example from K18v above, K7c explained that he had been encouraged to phone his mentor if he was feeling in need of a chat, and that his mentor had offered the possibility of meeting up for a game of snooker. This contrast illustrates the way that different mentors approach the role in different ways, but also the expectation that decisions about the shape and limit of the mentoring relationship are set by the mentor rather than the mentee.

Staff supervised and oversaw the developing relationships between volunteers and service users, assisting volunteers to maintain the required boundaries. For example, at his third interview, K9c explained that he could talk to his mentor about 'anything and everything'. If he phoned her up, she would come out to see him 'straightaway.' K17v (the mentor), at her interview, said that K9c 'needs someone to talk to' and suggested that meeting that need was 'a massive part of mentoring'. However, she added that, on occasions she had 'cut down the content' so that K9c did not overstep a boundary. K12s, the community chaplain supervising K17v, acknowledged the quality of the mentoring relationship in this case, describing K17v as 'firm but fair'.

The procedure at Futures Unlocked was to review mentoring arrangements about every six weeks, at a session attended by mentor, mentee and community chaplain.

Futures Unlocked and WYCCP arranged the ending of community chaplaincy relationships in different ways. At WYCCP meetings with resettlement workers and link workers became less frequent as pressing practical problems were resolved and WYCCP aimed to reach a mutual decision about ending a relationship, doing this at the point when everyone agreed that no further support was needed. In a number of cases, however, contact ceased before this point and a letter was then sent to the service user and the case closed. Former service users were able to call or telephone the office and could re-engage as current clients.

At the time of his third research interview, J1c looked ahead to a point, in a few months, when he would have full time work or 'summat more to occupy me' and would not need the support of WYCCP any longer. J3c explained that he and the resettlement worker had talked about 'closing the file' but had agreed to keep it open because J3c valued the weekly phone calls from his link worker and wanted to be able to ask for help with letters and forms. J5c said 'even though I'm settled…..they're still willing to support me through things'. However, by comparison, it was not possible to arrange third research interviews with three (of nine) study participants because they were no longer in touch with WYCCP.

The procedure at Futures Unlocked was to review mentoring arrangements about every six weeks, at a session attended by mentor, mentee and community chaplain. Mentoring would continue if there was still work to be done. The hope was that mentoring would come to a planned end (maybe preceded by a decline in the frequency of mentoring sessions). At the time of the third research interviews, six (of ten) client interviewees were still working with a mentor, one had come to a planned end with his mentor and three had stopped contact in an unplanned way.

The community chaplains stressed that Futures Unlocked viewed mentoring as time-limited not open-ended. K11s said 'we don't set a time – but, from the start, explain that, at review meetings we will ask if there is still work to be done.' After the mentoring task is complete, any further contact for the mentee is expected to be through the office, and not with the mentor who will have said goodbye and deleted the mentee's contact information.

Evidence from interviews, however, suggested that the process of ending was more nuanced than this. K2c was happy with the way that his mentoring arrangement had ended. His circumstances were unusual because he was being mentored by a member of staff rather than a volunteer, and he clearly still felt in touch with the organisation explaining that he liked to send a text to his former mentor every week or so. There were other suggestions that community chaplaincy relationships did not end at the point that formal mentoring ceased, for example more than one volunteer explained that it was possible for mentees to contact them after the formal end of the relationship.

At the time of their third interview, four (of six) of the Futures Unlocked clients still working with a mentor expressed ambivalence about losing this support and company, reluctantly accepting as K5c said 'I can't have a mentor for the rest of my life.' K1c attributed the time limit on mentoring to a shortage of resources. He suggested that mentoring should be available for 'a couple of years at least.' K9c said that he would like his contact with his mentor to go on 'as long as possible.'

Both Futures Unlocked and WYCCP are supporting people who have long-term needs, are ill-equipped for independent living and without help from relatives or friends. Staff pointed to the lack of care for adults in the community with complex needs, including health problems and learning difficulties. These problems were compounded for individuals assessed as posing a potential risk of harm to others. K15v, talking about a particular client, explained that it was difficult to follow usual mentoring practice in these cases; it was hard to establish someone in activities and groups and then 'gradually bow out' if 'no-one else will have him.' Community chaplaincy is supporting some people who are likely to need help throughout their lives.

4.12 Community chaplaincy as an organisation and in relation to other organisations

Community chaplaincies are part of the local network of support for former prisoners and probationers in the community. This section of the report considers the relationship of community chaplaincy to statutory agencies (particularly probation agencies), the wider voluntary sector and to faith organisations.

One distinctive feature of community chaplaincies, not shared in common with other agencies in the criminal justice voluntary sector, is the link with faith organisations

The link between community chaplaincy and prison was discussed in Section 4.4. The link between community chaplaincy and probation is important too. Almost all prisoners are subject to statutory supervision in the community for at least 12 months after release; those deemed as posing a high risk of causing serious harm are the responsibility of the NPS, those assessed as low and medium risk are the responsibility of their local CRC.

The resettlement and reintegration of released prisoners is a key task for probation. For Futures Unlocked (although not so much for WYCCP given the different relationship with prison), probation workers seeking additional support for supervisees were responsible for a significant proportion of referrals. This inter-agency link continues during the first few months after release, as community chaplaincy and probation work to achieve similar outcomes for service users.

Community chaplaincy staff had modest expectations of probation staff, viewing them as hard-pressed, under-resourced and constrained by process and procedure. K11s reported that one of the local probation officers had a caseload of 60 and could not give the work the time it deserved; as an illustration, K11s explained that he was about to spend a whole day with someone coming out of prison after ten years inside, for probation there was 'no prospect of them being able to do that.' J11s described a case where the WYCCP volunteer link worker 'worked above and beyond' taking on tasks that 'probation should have done'. K12s went furthest, suggesting that probation staff were often too busy to care about their clients.

Community chaplaincy service users (both men and women) were not inclined to be sympathetic to their probation supervisors, questioning not just their capacity but also their motivation to help. K6c said '[probation] don't do nothing. They are just in it for the money'. K7c also made the point about probation being 'just a job, a way of getting paid'. He said that he had not had 'one iota' of help from the probation service. J4c said that 'probation don't help you as much as WYCCP do…. they don't help you with much'. K3c contrasted his recent and past experiences of probation. 'They used to help you quite a lot [….] Now they just moan about lack of resources. It's on me to do stuff'.

One distinctive feature of community chaplaincies, not shared in common with other agencies in the criminal justice voluntary sector, is the link with faith organisations.

While there are similarities in the objectives of probation and community chaplaincy, the significant differences (in areas like public protection and the enforcement of orders and licences) inevitably shape the relationship between staff and service users. Service users explained that the power held by their probation supervisor was a barrier to honesty and openness. K3c explained that with probation 'I have to be positive – even if I'm having a bad day. The reality is that sometimes I'm in a hole.' J8c said that with probation 'you've got to be careful in so many ways….your life's in their hands.' The women focus group participants made very similar comments about their experience of probation supervision.

The Transforming Rehabilitation reforms (see Section 2.1) were posing problems for staff and trustees at both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked. Understanding and negotiating the new world of bids and contracts

was time-consuming, funding streams were uncertain and insufficient, and the introduction of market competition turned other voluntary sector agencies from partners to rivals.

A number of staff interviewees argued that the quality of community chaplaincy provision was poorly appreciated by commissioners, who preferred to contract with voluntary sector organisations offering a cheaper but lesser service. (To safeguard anonymity, the examples here are unattributed.) One worker contrasted the flexibility of the community chaplaincy approach with the more limited offer from the contracted mentoring provider, 'we will go anywhere – there's no limit where we can go – they have a limit on how long they work with people.' Another staff member predicted that the through-the-gate work undertaken by CRCs would come unstuck once it was shown to be ineffective. This person argued that it was important that community chaplaincies were not wholly reliant on CRC contracts, in order to retain a bit of freedom and be principally answerable to clients and volunteers.

Transforming Rehabilitation, and in particular the associated privatisation of much resettlement work, sharply challenges the ethos of many community chaplaincy staff and volunteers. One volunteer, clearly unhappy with the notion that his gift of time was contributing to the creation of private profit, said of the developing relationship between community chaplaincy and the CRC, 'I'll watch with interest. But if [the CRC] is working well, then OK'.

One distinctive feature of community chaplaincies, not shared in common with other agencies in the criminal justice voluntary sector, is the link with faith organisations. WYCCP and Futures Unlocked benefit from this link in a number of practical ways: for example, gifts of money, donations of household items for service users, and a modest supply of volunteers (as discussed in section 4.3). There are less immediately tangible benefits too: public awareness of the work of community chaplaincy increases through the giving of talks, and staff and volunteers are supported in their work through the prayer and fellowship of congregations and communities.

WYCCP and Futures Unlocked both gave examples of the support that they had received from local faith communities while suggesting that there was scope to strengthen these links. There was still work to do to persuade churches, mosques and other faith groups to do more to support people leaving prison and to enable them to participate in community life.

4.13 Improving community chaplaincy

Service users, volunteers and staff were asked to suggest how, from their perspective, the work of community chaplaincy could be improved. This question was asked of service users at the third interview, when people were able to look back over a number of months of involvement with the organisation. Not surprisingly this group of service users were broadly positive about the service they were receiving and had little to say about how it could be improved. K9c said that there was nothing that would improve the service, 'it's going all right as it is'.

Service users would recommend community chaplaincy to other people, indeed some already had. K7c explained that he had a chance meeting at the launderette with someone who turned out to be staying at the AP and could not see how to make progress with his housing problem. K7c suggested that he contact Futures Unlocked. J3c said that he had told other people 'you'd be stupid' not to take up this offer of support.

Three areas for improvement were suggested by service users: the level of funding and resources, the accessibility of premises, and publicity for the service. Each of these was also mentioned by staff and volunteers.

More money enabling more staff and more volunteers to help more clients was widely seen as desirable. From a service user perspective, K1c said 'It's the money, you see. I know it's a charity, but you still need money to run the place.' Women focus group participants also called for an increase in staffing. The level and security of funding was the point for improvement made most often by staff and volunteers; nine (of 16) interviewees specifically commented on this. More money would give community chaplaincy the opportunity to work with more people, and also to work more intensively with service users.

Staff and volunteers stressed that security of funding was important too. K11s observed that one of his colleagues did 'nothing but fund-raising'. J15v argued that 'decent' funding led to a stable organisation employing well-trained staff. J13s wished for a 'secure funding stream' and an increase in income sufficient to employ one further member of staff. She counselled against a significant expansion in the size of the organisation, pointing to the benefits that came from operating as a small organisation where all service users were well known.

The issue about accessibility of premises arose in slightly different ways in Futures Unlocked and WYCCP. One WYCCP service user observed that, to call at the office, he had to use two buses; he did not though offer a view about what could be done differently. At the time of fieldwork, Futures Unlocked had recently moved into new premises in Rugby which incorporated a café accessible to clients and to the general public. K7c, who lived in Nuneaton, had visited these premises for a review meeting with his mentor and community chaplain and valued the privacy that came with not meeting in public. He said 'they ought to have another premises in Nuneaton.' His mentor, K14v, agreed that the Rugby café 'gave a sense of belonging' for those mentors and mentees able to access it. The ambition of expanding the Futures Unlocked social enterprise was shared by the staff. Their wish list (ideas that would require additional staff time and funding to implement) included opening a second café elsewhere in the county as well as providing workshop space for clients to get involved in projects like bicycle repair.

K5c suggested that the work of community chaplaincy should be better known. He (along with a couple of other Futures Unlocked client interviewees who had been held in one of the local prisons) explained that he did not hear about the organisation while he was in prison. J12s spoke about the need to work closely with other staff in prison to ensure appropriate referrals, 'just to make sure the right people know about us.' Women service users also suggested that the work of community chaplaincy could be better known, although acknowledged that, without an increase in funding, it was unrealistic to expect community chaplaincy staff to spend more time in prison.

Two other staff and one volunteer interviewee also spoke about the need for increased recognition of the work of community chaplaincy; for them, this point was as much about changing public attitudes and influencing public policy as increasing referrals. K11s said 'I'd like the work we do to be rather more better recognised than it is'. J10s made a similar comment, identifying the risk that the worth of community chaplaincy would only be realised if the service was gone.

Further points for improvement were offered by staff and volunteers. These were (in the order most frequently mentioned by interviewees): working with families, developing the support provided to volunteers, directly providing housing for service users, improving ways of working with statutory agencies, working more with local communities, streamlining administration, and doing more for problem alcohol and drug users.

Both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked are increasingly involved in providing support to prisoners' family members. Seven interviewees (six staff members and one volunteer) identified this as an important area for development, with a second volunteer cautioning community chaplaincy against taking on too many tasks and losing focus on the work of supporting people coming out of prison. However, the majority of interviewees saw the provision of family support as a way of strengthening community chaplaincy and responding to a currently unmet need. For example, J12s argued that the new families' service demonstrated the reach and flexibility of community chaplaincy and K13s explained how the move into family support work followed logically from the organisation's values about the importance of all individuals. With an increase in funding, J10s would want to expand the 'community cohesion' work further, explaining that it could be fruitful to develop the families service and work more closely with a range of community groups including, but not limited to, faith groups.

Training, supporting and retaining volunteers is crucial to the community chaplaincy approach. Two interviewees specifically mentioned the benefits that came with having sufficient funding for a volunteer coordinator. J15v said that one of his wishes for the future was 'an appreciation by funders that training volunteers costs money'.

Staff and volunteers suggested that, for the most part, training was being done well. For example, the quality of training was praised by volunteer interviewees, and contrasted positively with that provided by other agencies. K12s explained that, nonetheless, it would be good to offer further input to volunteer mentors with more detailed information about issues such as mental health, benefits and alcohol abuse.

Reflecting on the on-going support they were receiving, volunteers were broadly positive. Three (of five) Futures Unlocked mentors did highlight the solitary aspect of mentoring: for example, K14v talked about feeling 'out on a limb' and K16v described mentoring as a 'lone wolf activity.' Mentors acknowledged that helpful and timely support was available from community chaplains by telephone and email. Comment about the monthly meetings organised to bring mentors together for support and information was mixed: K18v explained that it was hard to find time for meetings on top of time for mentoring, K14v regretted the decline in attendance at peer support meetings as these were 'an invaluable chance' for people to learn from each other and talk about frustrations. A couple of mentors (both students) talked about how difficulties claiming expenses for money spent during mentoring sessions led to them feeling not entirely valued and trusted. That said, one of these mentors concluded 'I really like the guys at Futures Unlocked' and wished that the organisation had more money to improve work with mentees and mentors.

Five interviewees (drawn from both WYCCP and Futures Unlocked) suggested that providing housing would improve the community chaplaincy service. However, moving into housing management was recognised to require additional staff time, expertise and resources. K11s suggested that having properties to offer homeless clients would be a 'step change – we could manage resettlement so much better.' K12s wondered whether a church would be able to help with financing Futures Unlocked accommodation. Improving the community chaplaincy service by providing more help with substance use problems was mentioned by just one interviewee, a WYCCP volunteer who argued that, if this issue was tackled first, 'all the other stuff will be much easier.' He questioned whether staying out of trouble and achieving stability in the community was achievable for people struggling with drink and drugs.

Staff and volunteers also suggested ways in which statutory agencies could make changes that would benefit the community chaplaincy service, while being pessimistic about the likelihood of this happening (particularly if these changes involved unpicking the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms). K11s called for a re-appraisal of funding arrangements under which probation could avoid paying for mentoring if referrals were made post-release rather than as part of formal through-the-gate contracts. K13s wished for local prisoners to be held closer to home and for an increase in the number of prisoners permitted release on temporary licence (enabling prisoners to gain work experience in the Futures Unlocked café and to begin to build a support network in the community).

A couple of Futures Unlocked staff suggested that the systems for managing client records and recording data could operate better. However, both agreed that the position was improving and K12s acknowledged that his dislike of paperwork meant that he was likely to find any recording system onerous.

To sum up, the overall sense from service users, staff and volunteers was that community chaplaincy should not be seeking to change its approach, but rather to find ways of supporting a greater number of people and to add services (like family work and housing support) that complemented the work of resettlement workers and mentors.

5.0 Discussion and conclusion

This piece of work began with three principal research objectives, to:

1. **Examine the key factors in the approach taken by Community Chaplaincy.**
2. **Highlight those factors that represent 'added value' above the routine practice of post-release supervision.**
3. **Demonstrate how these factors contribute to both 'primary' and 'secondary' desistance.**

5.1 The key factors in the approach taken by community chaplaincy

The study has found that the key factors in the approach taken by community chaplaincy are the nature of the relationships that develop between service users, staff and volunteers, the broad range of practical help on offer, and the values that underpin the delivery of the service.

Relationships are at the heart of community chaplaincy. Service users speak of interactions which are warm and genuine; they describe a sense that people have time for them, and care about them. The quality of relationships develops with time, but positive comments were made by service users in first interviews as well as in final interviews. Community chaplaincy staff and volunteers are good at working, from the outset, in a way that communicates concern and fosters trust.

The voluntary nature of community chaplaincy is important to service users in two main ways. Firstly, the offer of help is seen as unconditional, not at risk of being withdrawn in the event of non-compliance with rules. Secondly, the charitable nature of community chaplaincy leads service users to attribute altruistic motives to both staff and volunteers, they are seen as genuinely wanting to help rather than merely doing a job. Service users are clearly impressed with individuals who give up free time to spend with them, but this positive assessment is extended to community chaplaincy paid staff too. Resettlement workers and community chaplains, unlike probation staff, are not judged to be (to borrow the words of K6c) 'in it for the money'.

Relationships are at the heart of community chaplaincy.

The help offered through community chaplaincy is distinctively flexible and individual. There is no sense that there is a 'community chaplaincy package' that service users must accept or decline. Rather, the practical help provided is shaped by the needs and priorities of the service user. It is not limited to a fixed number of sessions, or a set period of time, or a particular place. As a consequence of their involvement with community chaplaincy, service users in this study found accommodation, started voluntary work and dealt with financial problems; others were encouraged through dental treatment, supported to attend a family funeral, accompanied to a concert, and pushed to get out for walks or to the gym.

Mentoring is one aspect of the community chaplaincy approach but community chaplaincy is more than mentoring. Mentoring (providing guidance, acting as a role model and encouraging self-efficacy) is integrated with practical help (in areas such as housing and money) and with emotional support. Service users value the sense of community that comes from being able to drop into the office or call at the café. They feel the benefit of having a chat with someone who is like a friend. Community chaplaincy is useful to service users because of its relational dimension as well as its planned and structured work. It is a distinctive feature of community chaplaincy that service users do not need a specific reason to get in touch. K17v summed up the strength of this way of working, 'you wouldn't ring your drugs worker for a chat if you were sad, or needed guidance, or help with options'.

Community chaplaincy relationships do have boundaries, and community chaplaincy organisations have arrangements in place to safeguard staff, volunteers and service users. However, it may be inevitable

that the authentic nature of community chaplaincy relationships leads to some boundary fuzziness, particularly around the ending of contact with service users.

The community chaplaincy ethos is expressed in a response that sees the intrinsic worth of each individual, is prepared to persevere, and remains committed to the possibility of future flourishing. This ethos is rooted, for community chaplaincy, in the faith-based foundation of each organisation. That said, this humanising and hopeful approach is not exclusively the preserve of groups and individuals motivated by religion and belief; community chaplaincy is able to work in successful partnership with secular organisations and the service is able to be delivered by staff and volunteers who do not profess a personal faith.

5.2 The factors that represent 'added value' above the routine practice of post-release supervision

This study set out with the task of comparing community chaplaincy with the routine practice of post-release supervision. One of its findings is that this comparison is of limited use; community chaplaincy is best advocated for its own strengths, rather than for the contribution it makes to achieving the goals of the prison and probation services.

Post-release supervision is part of the criminal justice process. It may include intervention that assists with resettlement and encourages desistance, but it inevitably entails monitoring with the threat of return to prison. Individual probation supervisors may be helpful, caring and willing to listen, but the context of post-release supervision means that service users are reluctant to talk freely to them. Indeed probation faces the challenge that service users are particularly unwilling to be open about problems or worries, fearing that they will be judged at increased risk of re-offending.

Community chaplaincy can stand at a distance from the criminal justice system; positioning itself alongside other community groups working with people who are disadvantaged, excluded and overlooked. This is one key difference between community chaplaincy and prison chaplaincy, which has long-standing institutional links with the prison service.

Prison and probation, of course, remain important partners for community chaplaincy. Working within prison provides community chaplaincy staff with insight into the experience of service users, it raises the organisation's profile with prison staff and prisoners, and for some service users it leads to a relationship that begins in custody and continues through-the-gate. One finding from this study is that a through-the-gate relationship, while beneficial, is not an essential element of the community chaplaincy approach; successful community chaplaincy work can commence post-release and is useful to people serving community as well as custodial sentences. There is no single blueprint for the partnership between community chaplaincy and prison, each community chaplaincy has a distinct history and links with its local prison (and often prisons) in a different way.

Probation and community chaplaincy inter-agency work has been painfully tested by the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms. Community chaplaincies, in common with other small voluntary sector agencies working in criminal justice, have experienced uncertain arrangements for new services and contractual arrangements. The financial position has been very tight, with the consequence that little community chaplaincy work done with probation clients is funded through probation contracts. The notion that the community chaplaincy service may be contributing to outcomes which generate financial rewards for private probation providers does not sit well with many community chaplaincy volunteers and staff.

Community chaplaincy operates in parallel with post-release supervision; partnership working, for example through exchanging information and agreeing plans, can avoid duplication of effort and improve the support provided to the client. The role of community chaplaincy is not, though, to replace the welfare role of the probation service or to enhance the experience of criminal justice supervision. The purpose of community chaplaincy is not to 'add value[5]' to the work of the statutory sector.

5 As an aside, it is worth noting that the term 'added value' is associated in some contexts not with improved quality of provision, but with performance management and accountability systems. In marketing and business, added value is something that makes a product more appealing to customers.

5.3 The contribution to desistance

This section considers the contribution made by community chaplaincy to the desistance process in two ways: first by drawing on the experience and perspective of service users, and second by assessing the extent to which community chaplaincy practice is in line with existing principles for desistance focused practice (such as those developed by McNeill et al (2012) and set out in Section 2.2).

The study suggests that community chaplaincy can play a crucial role in supporting progress towards desistance.

Service user interviewees do think that one purpose of community chaplaincy is to support the process of desistance. K5c said that the main point of community chaplaincy is to help you 'keep out of trouble' and 'stay on the straight and narrow'. J9c described the organisation as a 'rehabilitation project' helping with housing and family problems.

This study followed a small sample of service users over a number of months and so was able to go beyond taking a snapshot of people's views, opinions and intentions with respect to desistance. However, in common with all time-limited studies, it is not possible to know the longer-term outcomes for the service user interviewees and, in particular, to know what became of hopes and aspirations for the future. During the period of the research study, five (of 19) service user interviewees were returned to prison, either convicted of a further offence or as a result of breaching licence conditions. It is possible that others re-offended too; community chaplaincy only sometimes knows about offending by former clients and would not necessarily be aware of offending by current clients. However, given the zigzag path to desistance, it would not be correct to label service users as 'persisters' (rather than 'desisters') on the basis of a further conviction during the study period. Two (of five) service user interviewees returned to prison were back in the community and in touch with community chaplaincy by the end of the study period.

The study suggests that community chaplaincy can play a crucial role in supporting progress towards desistance. This is not the case universally; the study contains examples of people whose involvement with community chaplaincy was motivated by the offer of immediate practical help rather than any desire to change their way of living. This group disengages either satisfied if help was forthcoming or frustrated if the problems proved intractable. For example, at his third interview, K6c observed that, as his council tax debt remained outstanding, he was 'not at all sure what he has got out' of his contact with community chaplaincy.

However, the study also contains examples of service users who were trying to move away from past problems in areas such as offending, substance use and mental health and build a different sort of life. This is a group of 'aspiring desisters', all of whom faced obstacles and frustrations over the study period.

J4c was one of the people recalled to prison during the study period. He maintained contact with WYCCP through his time in custody and following his re-release. J4c's progress towards desistance was fragile, but he attributed significant value to the support he received from WYCCP, '[without them]….being totally honest with you, I wouldn't be here now, I'd either have done myself in or gone back on drugs'.

J1c, perhaps more securely on the path to desistance, talked at his third interview about the role that WYCCP played in supporting his 'new way of life' particularly at times when 'I was getting into a bit of a rut and lose a bit of patience'. At his third interview J1c described how, despite not needing to have regular meetings, occasional contact with community chaplaincy left him 'reinvigorated' and 'kept pushing me along'. K2c also made a close link between community chaplaincy and desistance, explaining the purpose of community chaplaincy as to help me move forward, to keep out of trouble, to see a new future'. K2c was making a second attempt at building a life in the community after a lengthy prison sentence (his first attempt, not supported by Futures Unlocked, having ended in recall). He

praised both the practical help and the emotional support provided by community chaplaincy, observing that 'having Futures Unlocked, even just to listen, it's a massive thing'.

Alongside the evidence of commitment to change evident from the accounts of service users, it is also possible to compare the community chaplaincy approach in this study with principles for desistance focussed practice. McNeill et al (2012) suggest eight points for desistance focussed practice. Taking these in turn:

a) being realistic about the complexity and difficulty of the process

   Community chaplaincy staff and volunteers know about the extent and complexity of the problems faced by people leaving prison. They are positive with service users about the possibility of progress, but matter-of-fact about obstacles and hurdles. Service users appreciate the time taken to help them with the detail of applications, referrals and appointments that are an unavoidable aspect of resuming life in the community. The perseverance exhibited by community chaplaincy staff, and their readiness to give people second and subsequent chances, attests to their understanding of the frustration and ambivalence inherent in the desistance process.

b) individualising support for change

   Individualising support for change is a real strength of the community chaplaincy approach. As described in Section 4.10, staff and volunteers provide a service that is driven by the particular needs and circumstances of each individual. The service is flexible, not time limited, and not tied to an office base. Staff and volunteers make use of this flexibility. They are able to respond to the individual's priorities, which often involves spending a great deal of time with service users with complex needs.

c) building and sustaining hope

   Community chaplaincy builds hope by demonstrating to service users that they are not dealing with problems and difficulties on their own, and by linking them with people who are positive about their prospects. K3c described his sense that Futures Unlocked could see that there was hope for his future. The study also provides evidence of this hope being sustained over a number of months and surviving knock-backs and practical problems. However, it also shows the challenge of maintaining hope in the face of intractable problems, the solutions to which (for example, availability of secure and suitable accommodation) are beyond the reach of community chaplaincy.

d) recognising and developing people's strengths

   The study suggests that community chaplaincy staff think of service users as individuals with weaknesses and strengths. Both Futures Unlocked and WYCCP assess risks faced by staff, volunteers and service users, but the service provided is not led by concerns about risk and service users are not first viewed through the lens of risk management. Mentors and resettlement workers encourage service users to develop their strengths, for example through involvement in volunteering, leisure or art activities.

e) respecting and fostering agency (or self-determination)

   Futures Unlocked and WYCCP both operate in a way that respects client self-determination. Service users choose whether to remain involved with the organisations and identify their own goals and priorities. Staff and volunteers also assess how much to do on behalf of service users and how much service users must do for themselves. This study shows that this judgment varies depending on the situation and circumstances of the service user, but also the approach of the worker. Borrowing a concept from education (Collins et al 1989), community chaplaincy provides the 'scaffolding' that supports service users through the transition from prison to stability in the community, scaffolding that can be gradually removed or temporarily reinforced in response to progress or problems. One challenge identified in this study is how best community chaplaincy

should work with individuals who (for example as a result of learning difficulties or poor mental health) are likely to require long-term support but do not meet the eligibility criteria for adult social care.

f) working with and through relationships (both personal and professional)

As explored in Section 4.9, the relational dimension of community chaplaincy is critical. Service users describe relationships with staff and volunteers that are genuine, helpful, reciprocal and caring; they compare these relationships favourably with those built with workers at other agencies. Personal and professional boundaries in community chaplaincy are not straightforward; they are more complex in practice than in policy. For example, mentoring relationships are not friendships, but they are often experienced as 'like friendships'. Contact with community chaplaincy is not intended to last forever, but service users are invited to keep in touch (with the organisation if not the mentor) and a number do continue to call in or telephone. Staff and volunteers involve themselves with service users in ways that go well beyond the traditional tasks of resettlement, examples from this study included sharing food, giving a birthday present, going together to a concert, and sorting out travel arrangements to a family funeral.

g) developing social as well as human capital

Social capital concerns the pattern and intensity of networks among people and the opportunities and shared values which arise from those networks. Higher levels of social capital are associated with positive outcomes in areas such as health, housing and employment, as well as desistance. WYCCP and Futures Unlocked assist the development of social capital by linking service users (who would otherwise be significantly socially isolated) with individual members of the local community (that is, chaplaincy staff and volunteers). Community chaplaincy has the potential to go beyond this, further developing social capital by linking service users with networks and opportunities brokered by staff and volunteers. There was limited evidence of this in the study, examples included a service user finding a volunteering placement in a charity known to his mentor and someone else joining a local walking group.

h) recognising and celebrating progress.

As a result of the encouraging and positive ethos of community chaplaincy, service users generally feel that their progress is recognised and praised. At the time of their final interview, all but one service user made a positive comment about the way that their mentor or resettlement worker acknowledged the progress made over the past months. K6c, the one exception, was frustrated at the time of this interview by a sense that his practical problems were failing to improve. He said that he 'hadn't a clue' whether the community chaplain recognised his progress. The comments made by K7c and J3c were more typical. K7c explained that the regular formal review meetings with his mentor and the community chaplain were a helpful opportunity to see the progress he had made. J3c said that people at the organisation were 'always telling me how well I'm doing.'

In summary, this study argues that the community chaplaincy approach contributes to desistance in a number of ways. Of particular importance are the quality of relationships between staff, volunteers and service users, the individualised support provided for each individual, and the ethos of hope and perseverance that shapes the service. To repeat the words of K2c, community chaplaincy is 'to help me move forward, to keep out of trouble, to see a new future'.

5.4 Looking ahead

This final section of the report draws together the study's findings suggesting ways in which community chaplaincy practice can continue to assist rather than frustrate the process of desistance. Given the differences between community chaplaincies, there can be no single framework for a desistance-focussed approach. These suggestions are offered as points for consideration as community chaplaincy looks to both its and its clients' futures.

Providing evidence about service user desistance

Desistance is best understood as a process rather than an event. It is made up of changes in behaviour, identity and acceptance by others. It is not the same as avoiding reconviction in a specified time period. For these reasons, it hard to measure and challenging to evidence. This is a difficulty for community chaplaincy in a world where funders and commissioners ask about outcomes.

Community chaplaincy is able to offer a range of evidence to interested stakeholders which, taken together, illustrates the way that the work assists the process of desistance. Collecting systematic data about client progress and re-offending outcomes remains important. Ensuring that the service is delivered in line with principles for desistance focussed practice is another way of showing that quality and effectiveness are taken seriously. Listening to service users and their perspective on the extent to which community chaplaincy helps or hinders is important too.

Engaging service users and reaching the reluctant

One challenge for community chaplaincy is to encourage a greater number of prisoners and probationers to contemplate the service, and then to engage for more than an initial meeting. The evidence from this study suggests that, having overcome this initial hurdle, most clients remain involved with the service for long enough to achieve something positive.

The commitment, approach and humanity of staff and volunteers are clear strengths of community chaplaincy.

One point that merits further consideration is whether there are particular problem areas or stages in the desistance process where the community chaplaincy approach is a particularly good fit. The evidence from this study suggests that, at present, WYCCP and Futures Unlocked are working with service users who are older than the average for the prison population, and frequently facing multiple problems of housing, health and substance use. Doing more to engage reluctant potential service users from this group would build on existing community chaplaincy expertise. As well as work in prison, this could involve more systematic work with NPS and CRC staff. Producing information about community chaplaincy that described the non-evangelical and non-institutional nature of the work may encourage some reluctant potential clients to engage. For some service users, the faith-based nature of community chaplaincy is a barrier to engagement as it brings echoes of past negative experiences with organised religion. (In other cases the opposite is true, with service users pre-disposed to be positive about a service seen as motivated by a desire to do good.)

A contrasting development would be to specifically seek to increase the numbers of, for example, younger service users, service users from a wider range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, and women service users. To do this would have implications for work within prisons, and require a plan to recruit, train and support a more diverse range of volunteers and mentors. It might also require changes to the delivery of community chaplaincy (for example the inclusion of new activities or reaching out to a wider range of faith communities) as well as a shift in the way that community chaplaincy is presented to potential service users.

Community chaplaincy people

The commitment, approach and humanity of staff and volunteers are clear strengths of community chaplaincy. Service users tend not to distinguish between paid staff and unpaid volunteers, praising both in similar terms. Paid staff are particularly appreciated for their availability and flexibility, volunteers are respected for being generous with their own time.

Volunteering as a mentor or link worker for community chaplaincy is a significant commitment and demands particular skills. This study suggests that, almost all the time, WYCCP and Futures Unlocked were dealing well with the task of recruiting, training and supporting suitable volunteers. The small number of difficulties that were identified in the research were caused by differences in expectation (for example, when a service user felt that a volunteer was insufficiently available to be useful or a volunteer felt that a problem claiming expenses reflected a general lack of appreciation for their work).

Community chaplaincy works best as a team activity, with support and supervision available for volunteers as well as staff. Setting a clear expectation that volunteers participate in these activities diminishes the pool of available volunteers (as it increases the time needed to fulfil the role) but is part of securing the quality of the service.

Looking ahead, volunteer support and supervision are essential. Community chaplaincy premises (where staff, volunteers and service users can meet together) provide informal opportunities for this; they are also an environment in which service users are able to volunteer their time to help the organisation. However, the demands of the mentoring role mean that an element of formal supervision remains important.

Community chaplaincy, prison and probation

This study shows that community chaplaincy can work effectively with people referred after they have been released from prison and, indeed, with those subject to community rather than custodial sentences. Equally, while beginning the work in prison and continuing post-release works well for some individuals, it does not guarantee lasting engagement. As a consequence, there is merit in community chaplaincy being well known inside prison, but also amongst CRC and NPS practitioners (perhaps particularly those based in approved premises).

Community chaplaincy is not best understood as a supplementary service to the work of prison and probation, rather it is a demonstration of care and help for individuals in the community at a particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged moment in their lives. To judge the work of community chaplaincy solely on its contribution to criminal justice objectives overlooks its role in the wider response to social justice and community development.

It is a challenge for community chaplaincy to maintain its profile with prison and probation, particularly at a time of reorganisation and rapid staff turnover. The impact of personal contact, nurtured as community chaplaincy staff (and volunteers) spend time in prison and in probation, is important. Service users also suggest that more, and regularly up-dated, information on posters and in leaflets is helpful.

Mentoring, practical help and emotional support

The strength of the community chaplaincy approach lies in its blend of mentoring, practical help and emotional support, a blend that is individually crafted in response to the circumstances of the client. This is the approach spelled out in the CCA Theory of Change (CCA/NPC nd).

Community chaplaincy is more than mentoring. Service users value practical help with the tasks of resettlement (obtaining identification documents, making housing applications, attending medical appointments) as well as the chance to enjoy relaxed human companionship over a cup of coffee and slice of cake. That said, the element of mentoring or key-working is crucial, providing the relationship that holds, steers and guides the service user through the frustrations and setbacks of life after prison.

Across the country, community chaplaincies run a variety of social enterprises and directly provide a number of services that extend the work beyond mentoring. Examples include cafés, drop-in centres,

supported housing and work/training opportunities. A challenge for community chaplaincy (thinking about funding and staffing as well as about mission) is to decide whether to develop further with this work. The creation of cafés and similar centres gives opportunity for work experience, income generation and broader community development, as well as a base for mentoring and resettlement activities. Community chaplaincy controlled and managed housing provides some service users with a route out of homelessness and poor quality accommodation. There is knowledge and experience in the CCA network about managing housing that can usefully be shared with chaplaincies wishing to develop this aspect of their work.

There is no one blueprint that will work for all community chaplaincies. Looking ahead, decisions about expanding into housing management or community cafés will depend on resources, the enthusiasm of staff and the existing pattern of local provision.

Community chaplaincy ethos

An ethos which values people, cares for them, and wants to see them live a good life is at the heart of community chaplaincy. This ethos is expressed in practice in the quality of the relationships developed between service users, staff and volunteers. The evidence from this study is that, while these networks of relationships are not always perfect (volunteers did not always feel valued and service users did not always respond positively to staff), service users appreciate the warmth and authenticity of their interaction with community chaplaincy. The quality of the relational aspect of community chaplaincy is different from service users' experiences with other agencies.

Service users view staff and volunteers as worthy of trust, and are prepared to share difficult information and bad news. They appreciate the reliability of community chaplaincy, the way that staff and volunteers do what they say they are going to do. The notion of perseverance, and of giving people many chances, is important to service users, staff and volunteers.

Community chaplaincy relationships have appropriately fuzzy boundaries. It is correct to protect everyone's privacy and safety, and so rules about sharing personal information, setting venues for meetings, and planning for the end of contact are necessary. However, staff and volunteers respond to the particular needs and circumstances of service users by, on occasions, offering more time or help than prescribed by those rules.

Some people leave prison with long-term health and care needs that will last beyond the period of involvement with community chaplaincy. Mentoring and resettlement help can build the confidence that service users need to engage with other organisations and informal networks but, as K5c observed, it is not possible to have a mentor for life. Looking ahead, the process of moving on from (and making a good ending with) community chaplaincy merits further consideration.

Community chaplaincy and faith

The values of community chaplaincy flow explicitly from the faith-base of the organisation. Hope, love, forgiveness and belief in the importance of every person are not exclusively religious values (they are expressed in the practice of secular organisations too) but, for community chaplaincy, the link between the ethos of the organisation and principles derived from faith is crucial. Many staff and volunteers do not describe themselves as people of faith, but are convinced by (and advocates for) the community chaplaincy ethos.

This study suggests that the relationship between community chaplaincy and local faith communities has scope for development. Local faith communities can offer some resources (people, publicity, money, campaigning) to community chaplaincy. Thinking particularly about desistance, they are also a potential source of social capital to service users (and to people moving on from their service user status).

The concept of relational-desistance (Nugent and Schinkel 2016) highlights that acceptance and recognition from others is part of the desistance journey. Looking ahead, community chaplaincy is well-placed to educate and enable faith communities to play a more active part in this process.

In conclusion, the study identifies a number of good practice principles for community chaplaincies seeking to support service users on the path to desistance. Community chaplaincies (both new and existing) can put these points into action by:

- Continuing with the work that community chaplaincy does well: providing individualised support for change; offering hope; allowing second and subsequent chances; creating trusting, caring and authentic relationships.
- Collecting and recording information about the changing circumstances of service users. As well as providing evidence needed by funders and partners, this is also a means of recognising and celebrating progress.
- Considering whether the knowledge and skills of the community chaplaincy suggest maintaining a focus on a particular cohort of service users. For example, for some chaplaincies, it may be appropriate to build expertise with persistent offenders, or individuals with housing problems, or women.
- Alternatively, considering what new resources are needed to work with a more diverse group of service users. For example, this may include recruiting a wider pool of volunteers and building links across faith communities.
- Developing and sustaining a team approach. This provides support for volunteers and staff, while creating a framework for service users that endures beyond the period of a one-to-one relationship.
- Arguing for community chaplaincy on its own terms. The service has distinctive aims and characteristics. While community chaplaincy contributes to the aims of the criminal justice system, this is not its principal function.
- Building positive working relationships with prison and with probation.
- Learning from existing experience in the CCA network about broadening community chaplaincy provision, particularly in the areas of housing provision and work with service users' families.
- Linking those service users who would otherwise be significantly socially isolated with networks and opportunities brokered by staff and volunteers. This is an important way in which community chaplaincy assists the development of social capital.
- Galvanising faith groups to engage with community chaplaincy, enabling them to be more active in this work and challenging them to be a community in which service users are straightforwardly welcome.
- Recognising that community chaplaincy is more than the sum of its parts. The blend of mentoring, practical help and emotional support is held together by the values of hope, love, forgiveness and belief in the importance of every person.

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7.0 List of figures

8.0 List of abbreviations

AP	Approved Premises
CCA	Community Chaplaincy Association
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NPS	National Probation Service
WYCCP	West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project

9.0 Interview topic guide

9.1 Service user interview 1

Order can vary and clarification/deepening questions at any appropriate point.

1. **Introduction**
    a. Reminder of the purpose of the research - focus on understanding how FU/WYCCP helps - interested in what you think, won't be telling FU/WYCCP what you said. I work for the University of Cambridge - not FU/WYCCP.
    b. Confirming consent to the interview and how can stop at any time
    c. Any questions about the interview
2. **Life since prison**
    a. When did you leave prison?
    b. How many contacts have you had with FU/WYCCP since your release?
    c. Who from FU/WYCCP have you seen?
    d. Where have you met?
    e. What have you done?
    f. What has been useful/helpful? How?
    g. So far, what have you got out of your involvement with FU/WYCCP?
3. **Looking to the future**
    a. What are the next 6 weeks looking like for you?
    b. What's important to you? How are you feeling about the next 6 weeks? What are you feeling positive about? What's your biggest problem at the moment?
    c. Is there anything that you would like to change or get sorted out over the next 6 weeks? If yes, then what.
    d. Is this something that FU/WYCCP are able to help with?
    e. If yes, how are they going to help you?
    f. How would you like FU/WYCCP to be able to help you? How could FU/WYCCP change so that it was able to help you?
    g. Do you think you will still be in contact with FU/WYCCP in 6 weeks time?
4. **Getting involved with FU/WYCCP**
    a. How did you find out about Futures Unlocked/WYCCP? (Prompts: did someone tell you? Did you see a poster/a leaflet?)
    b. What did you think about FU/WYCCP before you made contact with them?
    c. Was it easy to get in touch with them?
5. **Getting started with FU/WYCCP in prison**
    a. How many meetings with FU/WYCCP people did you have while you were in prison?
    b. What happened during those meetings? Was there anything useful/helpful?/What was useful/helpful? (Was there anything unhelpful?)
    c. Who from FU/WYCCP have you met?

6. **Why FU/WYCCP?**
    a. What do you hope to get out of your involvement with FU/WYCCP? How do you think the people here can help you?
    b. Why did you decide to get involved with FU/WYCCP?
    c. What is the main aim of FU/WYCCP from your point of view?
    d. If you were telling someone about FU/WYCCP (who was thinking about using the service), how would you explain what it does?
    e. What has encouraged you to stay in contact with FU/WYCCP so far?
7. **The quality of FU/WYCCP**
    a. How do you get on with the people/named people here at FU/WYCCP?
    b. Are you in contact with the probation service? Have you been in contact with the probation service before?
    c. How similar or different is FU/WYCCP from the probation service?
    d. What is different? (Probe re what the service does/flexibility/structure/relationship/expectation etc)
    e. Is there a difference between the way that you get on with people here at FU/WYCCP and the way that you get on with people from the probation service? (Probe re respect, how spoken to, whether feel like person or number)
8. **The role of FU/WYCCP as (multi-)faith based organisations**
    a. FU describes itself as service "asa multi-faith organisation representing diverse faith backgrounds"/WYCCP describes its service as "a practical application of faith" - what do you think about that?
    b. Were you aware of the faith-based nature of the organisation before today? What made you aware?
    c. Do you feel the faith-based nature of the organisation affects the service you receive? How?
9. **Ending**
    a. Is there anything else you would like to mention?
    b. Thank you for participation [and voucher]
    c. Would you be happy to speak again in about 6 weeks time (collect contact details)

9.2 Service user interview 2

Order can vary and clarification/deepening questions at any appropriate point.

1. **Introduction**
    a. Reminder of the purpose of the research - focus on understanding how FU/WYCCP helps - interested in what you think, researchers don't work for FU/WYCCP and won't be telling FU/WYCCP what you said
    b. Confirming consent to the interview and how can stop at any time
    c. Any questions about the interview

2. **Life in the last six weeks**

   a. We last spoke six weeks ago –in/on [date/timing] – how have things been going for you since then? (That was x time since your release? –Clarify timing)

   b. How many contacts have you had with FU/WYCCP since then?

   c. Who from FU/WYCCP have you seen?

   d. Where have you met?

   e. What have you done?

   f. What has been useful/helpful? How?

   g. Thinking back over the whole time since your release (around 6-8 weeks), so far, what have you got out of your involvement with FU/WYCCP?

3. **The quality of FU/WYCCP**

   a. How are you getting on with the people/named people here at FU/WYCCP?

   b. [Noting whether they are in contact with the probation service] How similar or different is FU/WYCCP from the probation service and other agencies such as community mental health workers or drugs alcohol workers? Probe differences now.

   c. How similarly or differently do you get on with the people at FU/WYCCP compared with the probation service?

   d. Is there anything about FU/WYCCP that is difficult for you? Any barriers to getting the help you're looking for?

   e. What encourages you keep in contact with FU/WYCCP?

4. **The role of FU/WYCCP as (multi-)faith based organisations**

   a. I asked you last time about FU/WYCCP being a faith organisation – is that something that you think about while accessing their service?

   b. Do you feel the faith-based nature of the organisation affects the service you receive? How?

5. **Why FU/WYCCP?**

   a. If you were talking to someone about to be released who was thinking of using FU/WYCCP's service, what would you say about how they can help?

   b. Have your ideas about FU/WYCCP changed over the past 6 weeks?

   c. Have you thought about stopping your contact with FU/WYCCP? What has led you to stay in contact so far?

   d. In your opinion, what is the main aim of FU/WYCCP?

   e. What do you hope to get out of your involvement with FU/WYCCP? How do you think the people here can help you?

6. **Looking to the future**
    a. What are the next 6 weeks looking like for you?
    b. What's important to you? How are you feeling about the next 6 weeks? What are you feeling positive about? What's your biggest problem at the moment?
    c. What would you like life to be like in 6 weeks time?
    d. Is there anything that you would like to change or get sorted out over the next 6 weeks? If yes, then what.
    e. Is this something that FU/WYCCP are able to help with?
    f. If yes, how are they going to help you?
    g. How would you like FU/WYCCP to be able to help you? How could FU/WYCCP change so that it was able to help you?
    h. Do you think you will still be in contact with FU/WYCCP in 6 weeks time?
7. **Ending**
    a. Is there anything else you would like to mention?
    b. Thank you for participation [and voucher]
    c. Would you be happy to speak again in about 6 weeks time (collect contact details if not held already)

9.3 Service user interview 3

Order can vary and clarification/deepening questions at any appropriate point.

1. **Introduction**
    a. Reminder of the purpose of the research - focus on understanding how FU/WYCCP helps - interested in what you think, researchers don't work for FU/WYCCP and won't be telling FU/WYCCP what you said
    b. Confirming consent to the interview and how can stop at any time
    c. Any questions about the interview
2. **Life in the last ten weeks**
    a. We last spoke ten weeks ago –in/on [date/timing] – how have things been going for you since then? (That was x time since your release? –Clarify timing)
    b. How many contacts have you had with FU/WYCCP since then? When are you going to be in contct with someone next?
    c. Who from FU/WYCCP have you seen?
    d. Where have you met?
    e. What have you done?
    f. What has been useful/helpful? How?
    g. Thinking back over the whole time since your release (around 4 months), so far, what have you got out of your involvement with FU/WYCCP?

3. **The quality of FU/WYCCP**

   a. How are you getting on with the people/named people here at FU/WYCCP?

   b. [If someone has talked positively about a person/people FU/WYCCP] Have you ever had a helpful relationship like this before? (Prompt: personal contact/ professional contact? Friend/ family/another organisation? What sort of help? What makes it similar?)

   c. [Noting whether they are in contact with the probation service] How similarly or differently do you get on with the people at FU/WYCCP compared with the probation service?

   d. Is there anything about FU/WYCCP that is difficult for you? Any barriers to getting the help you're looking for?

   e. [If still in contact] What encourages you keep in contact with FU/WYCCP?

   f. [If still in contact] How is FU/WYCCP going to help you over the coming months?

4. **The role of FU/WYCCP in supporting desistance**

My next questions are about whether WYCCP/FU helps people stay out of trouble

   a. Do you think that FU/WYCCP understands the difficulties that you have faced over the past few months? [If yes] What makes you think this?

   b. Do you think that [name of worker/volunteer] is positive about your chances of making progress? [If yes] What makes you think this?

   c. You have told me that, over the past few months you have (give examples of progress). Do you think [name of worker/volunteer] recognises this progress? [If yes] What makes you think this?

5. **Why FU/WYCCP?**

   a. If you were talking to someone about to be released who was thinking of using FU/WYCCP's service, what would you say about how they can help?

   b. Have your ideas about FU/WYCCP changed over the past ten weeks?

   c. In your opinion, what is the main aim of FU/WYCCP?

   d. Do you think that FU/WYCCP has helped you settle into the community? If so, how?

   e. Do you think that FU/WYCCP has helped you stay out of trouble? If so, how?

   f. What could WYCCP/FU do to improve the service they offer?

6. **If you are no longer in contact with FU/WYCCP**

   a. How did your contact with FU/WYCCP come to an end?

   b. Are you happy with the way that your contact ended?

   c. Can you get in touch with FU/WYCCP in the future? What would lead you to get back in touch?

7. **Ending**

   a. Is there anything else you would like to mention?

   b. Confirm that this will be the final research interview

   c. Thank you for participation over the past few months [and voucher]

9.4 Volunteers (mentors and link workers)

1. **Introduction:**
   - Reiterate aims in understanding how organisation helps (especially in relation to desistance)
   - Interested in understanding their perspective – up to 30 mins
   - Confidentiality, opportunity to refuse questions etc
   - Confirm consent to proceed and audio record and written record of this
2. **Background**
   - How long ago did you get involved with FU/WYCCP? How many clients/service users have you worked with?
   - Why did you want to volunteer for FU/WYCCP?
3. **Process of working with clients/service users**
   - For client/service user who participated in the study, what did they get out of contact/what are they getting out of contact with WYCCP/FU?[Probes if needed: signpost or support focus, relationship, help to stay out of trouble, anything else (particularly if there seems a gap with the account given by the client/service user)]
   - For client/service user who participated in the study, what did they get out of contact with you?
   - What are you aiming for with [name]??
   - (If has worked with more than one client/service user) What elements of your way of working are the same for every client/service user? What is different?
   - How do you work with the key worker/chaplain/resettlement worker to support clients/service users?
4. **Reflecting**
   - Is there something distinctive about the FU/WYCCP approach? (Probe: how does community chaplaincy make a difference?)
   - What does the faith basis of the organisation mean for you and your volunteering?
     - Does it affect how you volunteer?
     - Does it affect how clients/service users access the service?
   - What would improve the way FU/WYCCP supports people? Is there anything you would like to be able to do differently?
5. **Closing**
   - Anything else to add?
   - Confirm any further pertinent details about volunteering, linked interests or work, qualifications (if these points have not already been covered in the interview)
   - Thank you for your time today
   - Any questions about the research or comments about this interview?

9.5 Staff (chaplains and resettlement workers)

6. Introduction

- Reiterate aims in understanding how organisation helps, (especially in relation to desistance)
- Interested in understanding their perspective – up to an hour available
- Confidentiality, opportunity to refuse questions etc
- Confirm consent to proceed and audio record and written record of this

7. Background

- How would you describe your work as a [job title] to someone you'd just met?
- Why did you want to work for FU/WYCCP?
- What motivates you to do this work?

8. Process of working with clients/service users

- What are you aiming for with each individual who you work with?
- What elements of your way of working are the same for every client/service user? What is different?
- How do you think community chaplaincy makes a difference to clients/service users?
- How do you match service users/clients with link workers/mentors?
- For each client/service user who participated in the study, (ask one by one), what did they get out of contact/what are they getting out of contact? [Probes if needed: signpost or support focus, relationship, help to stay out of trouble, anything else (particularly if there seems a gap with the account given by the client/service user)] Is the work with (this client/service user) a success?

9. Reflecting

- What makes community chaplaincy different from other agencies that support ex-offenders in the community?
- You offer the service to a number of people who do not keep appointments with FU/WYCCP as soon as they are released from prison – what would help more people make a start with you in the community?
- What does the faith basis of the organisation mean for you and your work (if anything)?
  - Does it affect how you do your job?
  - Does it affect how clients/service users access the service?
  - Are there links between the organisation and faith communities in the wider community? What does that mean for your work?
  - If WYCCP/FU was a secular organisation, what would be different?
- What would improve the work of FU/WYCCP? Is there anything you would like to be able to do differently?
- What is the one thing about the work of FU/WYCCP that you would most like to change?

10. Closing

- Anything else to add?
- Confirm length of time with organisation, previous work experience, qualifications (if these points have not already been covered in the interview)
- Thank you for your time today – and for all your help with the research as a whole
- Any questions about the research or comments about this interview?

9.6 Staff (admin and management)

1. **Introduction:**
   - Reiterate aims in understanding how the organisation helps (especially in relation to desistance)
   - Interested in understanding their perspective – up to an hour available
   - Confidentiality, opportunity to refuse questions etc
   - Confirm consent to proceed and audio record and written record of this
2. **Background**
   - How would you describe your work as a [job title] to someone you'd just met?
   - Why did you want to work for FU/WYCCP?
   - What motivates you to do this work?
3. **Process of working with clients/service users**
   - What is FU/WYCCP aiming for with each individual who you work with?
   - What elements of your way of working are the same for every client/service user? What is different?
   - How do you think community chaplaincy makes a difference to clients/service users?
   - (If relevant) How do you match service users/clients with link workers/mentors?
   - Can you give me two contrasting examples of clients/service users whose work with FU/WYCCP was a success
4. **Reflecting**
   - What makes community chaplaincy different from other agencies that support ex-offenders in the community (prompt: statutory and voluntary agencies)
   - You offer the service to a number of people who do not keep appointments with FU/WYCCP as soon as they are released from prison – what would help more people make a start with you in the community?
   - What does the faith basis of the organisation mean for you and your work (if anything)?
     - Does it affect how you do your job?
     - Does it affect how clients/service users access the service?
     - Are there links between the organisation and faith communities in the wider community? What does that mean for your work?
     - If WYCCP/FU was a secular organisation, what would be different?
   - What would improve the work of FU/WYCCP? Is there anything you would like to be able to do differently? What is the one thing about the work of FU/WYCCP that you would most like to change?
   - What is your vision for FU/WYCCP in 3 years time?
   - How important is client/service user desistance in the overall work of FU/WYCCP
   - Thinking broadly about the system of supporting prisoners through the gate (i.e. not just about the work of FU/WYCCP), what is the one thing about that you would most like to change?
5. **Closing**
   - Anything else to add?
   - Confirm length of time with organisation, previous work experience, qualifications (if these points have not already been covered in the interview)
   - Thank you for your time today – and for all your help with the research as a whole
   - Any questions about the research or comments about this interview?

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Community Chaplaincy Association

Community Chaplaincy Association, C/O Peninsula Initiative Community Chaplaincy,
Wat Tyler House, King William Street, Exeter EX4 6PD

http://www.communitychaplaincy.org.uk/