

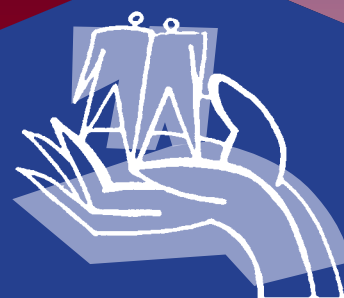
ANNUAL REPORT 2013



Information



**Help and Advice
Line for Offenders'
Wives, Partners
and Families**



HALOW
(Birmingham)

The Help & Advice Line for Offender's Wives, Partners and Families (known as HALOW (Birmingham) for short), is Registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 8248116 & new Registered Charity No. 1150445 (from 01.04.13) formerly Charity No. 1002675. The Charity was set up in 1985 to provide information, advice and support to prisoners' families and friends. Since 1996/7 HALOW (Birmingham) has worked with prison establishments (through service level agreements and latterly contracts) to co-ordinate Visitors' Centres at HMP Birmingham (from 1996), HMP Stafford (from 2001), HMP Featherstone (from 2003), HMYOI Brinsford (from 2005) and HMP Oakwood (from June 2012).

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HALOW (BIRMINGHAM)

Registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 8248116 & new Registered Charity No. 1150445
(from 01.04.13) formerly Charity No. 1002675

Registered Address: St Martin's Youth Centre, Gooch Street, Highgate, Birmingham, B5 6DR

Tel: 0121 707 1008

Email: admin@halowbirmingham.org.uk

Website: www.halowbirmingham.org.uk

MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE & STAFF

Management Committee

Officers

Jane Bailey	Chairperson
Bridget Cameron	Vice Chairperson, HR & Quality Assurance

Members

Veronica Palgrave
John Holcroft (Deceased December 2012)
Fayaz Malik
Baxter Willis (from July 2013)
Nirdesh Sandhu (from July 2013)

*Birmingham Visitors' Centre

Sharon Earley	Co-Manager
Najuma Mohammed	Co-Manager
Collette Ash	Support Worker
Jodie Stevens	Support Worker
Catherine Winters	Family Support Worker
Kristy Roberts	Children's Worker
Holly Atkins	Sessional Worker
Salma Alyas	Sessional Worker

*Brinsford Visitors' Centre

Debbie Burton	Manager
Ray Seafeld	Deputy Manager
Wendy Littler	Family Support Worker
Carlina Maydew	Support Worker
Leanne Barnard	Support Worker
Tanya Graham	Support Worker
Michelle Plant	Support Worker
Paul Sharman	Support Worker

*Featherstone Visitors' Centre

Gulzar Jutla	Manager
Victoria Smith	Deputy Manager
Volunteer Team	13 members

*Oakwood Family Pathway Centre

Daniel Daly	Manager
Kamaria Taylor	Deputy Manager
Deborah Vale	Support Worker
Clare Gallagher	Support Worker
Fiona Kiffin	Children's Worker
Kayleigh Harvey	Children's Worker
Rachelle Weaver	Cafe Assistant
Jacqueline Barlow	Cafe Assistant
Pariss Sailsman	Sessional Worker

*Stafford Visitors' Centre

Valerie Ledward	Manager
Anna Cottam	Deputy Manager
Eleanor Cheetham-Wilkinson	Children's Worker
Christine Connolly	Sessional Worker
Margaret Crossland	Sessional Worker
Sandra Jones	Sessional Worker
Volunteer Team	25 members

*Peripatetic Sessional Workers

Lucinda Betts	Sessional Worker
Hanka Churchill	Sessional Worker
Anne Edmunds	Sessional Worker
Sharondip Kaur	Sessional Worker
Lorraine Owen	Sessional Worker
Tony Southall	Sessional Worker

Central Services

Mairead Montague	P/T Finance Manager
Debbie Johnson	P/T Administrator
Malcolm Haywood	Health & Safety Officer

*Current as at the time of going to press, October 2013

THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'S REPORT



CHARITABLE OBJECTS

The Charitable Objects of HALOW (Birmingham) amended on incorporation, are:

- a) to relieve poverty, sickness and distress among prison inmates, ex-offenders and the partners and dependants of prison inmates and ex-offenders in need of such relief; and
- b) to advance public education by research into domestic issues relating to prison inmates, ex-offenders and their families and to disseminate the useful results of such research.

HISTORY OF HALOW (BIRMINGHAM)

HALOW (Birmingham) started life in the mid 1980s in a cramped 'two-up, two-down' terraced house in Winson Green, Birmingham where Marie Curtis and a dedicated group of volunteers helped other prisoners' wives and family members through the stresses and strains of serving 'the second sentence'. Over five years the self help community group developed to become a registered charity in October 1990. At this time the charity was dealing with 4,000 requests for help per year; a considerable achievement for one full-time member of staff and a dedicated team of volunteers offering a 24 hour helpline.

Over five years the self help community group developed and in October 1990 became a registered charity. From dealing with 4,000 requests for help in 1990 the charity staff and volunteers assisted 135,039 visitors' (including 25,548 children) during the 12 months April 2012 – March 2013.

CHAIR'S REPORT

During the past year HALOW (Birmingham) has continued to work with HM Prison Service establishments (HMPS) and G4S, operating support services in visitors' centres. During April – June 2012 we completed our Transition Fund grant activities started in 2011; this grant covered additional costs associated with changes to public sector contracts and the processes and procedures associated with these changes.

A three-year contract by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) runs until

The work of HALOW (Birmingham) is greatly enhanced by a considerable level of volunteer support.

30th June 2015 to deliver visitors' centres services at HMP Featherstone, HMP Stafford and HMYOI Brinsford. During the year we continued to deliver our existing contract with G4S to operate the visitors' centre at HMP Birmingham. From January 2013 we were awarded a two year contract with HMP Birmingham. We are pleased to report that a further contract with G4S was awarded in June 2012. This is to run the HMP Oakwood Family Pathway Centre. The contract for this is on a rolling basis.



This has been a year of change for the charity; a development grant from The Tudor Trust enabled us to review our governance with assistance from Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP. HALOW (Birmingham) has now incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee with the new structure operational from April 2013 (including a new charity registration number). We have also recruited two new Board members, Baxter Willis and Nirdesh Sandhu (formally appointed July 2013).

The management teams across all our visitors' have shown leadership and expertise of the highest standard as demonstrated by the positive comments made regularly in HM Inspectorate of Prisons Reports. With an average of 12,000 visitors centres assisted each month, the work is demanding, complex and often extremely fast-paced. The success of the charity is down to the dedication and hard work of all our staff teams assisted by loyal volunteers who provide invaluable assistance; we thank them all for their commitment during the year. This year over 40 volunteers have given their time in a wide range of roles.

I am particularly grateful to our Vice Chair and HR Lead Trustee,

THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Over the past 23 years HALOW (Birmingham) has grown to become a major provider of visitors' centre services



Bridget Cameron, who has continued to strengthen human resources. Her work has been invaluable in sustaining the organisation. She has worked particularly hard this year on recruiting children's workers, family support workers and a dedicated team of sessional workers. She aims to ensure the charity is fully compliant with legislative changes affecting out work.

I would like to thank the HALOW (Birmingham) Board, our Administrator Debbie Johnson and our P/T Finance Manager, Mairead Montague for their contribution during what has been another very busy and challenging year.

Finally, we are particularly saddened this year at the passing of John Holcroft, one of our longest standing Trustees on 9th December 2012. John will be sadly missed; he was a 'champion' for the disadvantaged in both his professional life and voluntary service.

FUNDING

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank the charitable trusts, local companies and many individuals that have provided donations (both funding and 'in kind') during the year. These include the Tudor Trust, W.A. Cadbury Trust, the Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust and Waitrose Community Matters. Significant charitable grants have been awarded from 3 charitable trusts to enable us to employ additional family support and children's workers (The Esme Fairbairn Foundation, Lloyds TSB Foundation and The Tudor Trust). These will be fully detailed in our 2014 Annual Report but we would like to acknowledge our gratitude at this investment in valuable new services.

We acknowledge the range of service agreement and contract income (from the Ministry of Justice and G4S) that enable us to provide visitors' centre services across our centres. We are also grateful to The John Sandy Trust which provides and maintains the visitors' centre at HMP Featherstone.



THE WAY FORWARD

We plan to seek charitable trust and other funds to further strengthen the range of activities, guidance and information resources available to prisoners' families. We continue to review procurement opportunities to operate further visitors' centres within the Midlands area and at the time of writing, are close to securing a new contract with a further establishment in the region.

The Trustees will be undertaking a Strategic Review early in 2014 when areas of potential development will be considered. For example, we will be exploring new 'through the gate' pilot projects working with prisoners and their families during the transition from custody to resettlement in the community. Our dedicated and experienced teams have worked hard over many years to establish an excellent track record of quality service to prisoners' families which we hope will grow and develop in the years ahead.

Jane Bailey

Chairperson, Trustee Board October 2013



We have worked with families of prisoners for many years, endeavouring to maintain family ties.

Picture used with kind permission of HMP Stafford.

Despite the prevailing economic problems we have been able to raise sufficient funds to extend the scope of our work. We have appointed dedicated children's workers and family support workers to work both in the visitors' centres and visits halls. We hope by early 2014 to have made this provision in all our centres.

We have developed new initiatives with the prisons e.g. father and baby bonding sessions, a drop-in advice centre for families and participation in the induction of new prisoners, to name just a few. We also network with a large number of agencies, some of which provide practical support.

We are currently engaged in restructuring data collection systems. This ensures we can further develop evidence of the impact of our work to both prisons and funders. We have worked with families of prisoners for many years, endeavouring

to maintain family ties. More recently in most prisons we have developed increasing contact with prisoners – in fact whole family involvement. Research confirms that maintaining family ties and

employment are the two factors which contribute most to the successful resettlement of prisoners.

We are now considering offering services “through the gate”. We are well placed to do this as we already have contact with both families and prisoners. We are enthusiastic with regard to this possible development.

In conclusion, I continue to be inspired by the work of our staff and volunteers. Their commitment, enthusiasm, ingenuity and energy never cease to amaze me. Grateful thanks to our central staff and to members of the Board.

Bridget Cameron, Vice Chair

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Birmingham Visitors' Centre

The visitors' centre at HMP Birmingham had 38,498 visitors throughout the year with 6,503 of these being children.

We have been fortunate in securing funding for extra staff and have recently recruited a full-time family support worker and a children's worker, with another to be appointed.

Our family support worker is currently in the process of liaising with outside agencies with the aim of setting up surgeries within the visitors' centre. The surgeries will be open to visitors and the local community and will be advertised in the locality and on the internet.

A major part of our work is catering for children. Without thought being given to the provision, they often become bored, distracted and frustrated during visits.



The benefits of learning through play are enormous and well documented. Children can develop their speech, language, hand/eye co-ordination, social skills etc. by participating in structured play activities with their peers. We advertise our activities in the visitors' centre and visits hall. We aim to provide activities for all main visits. These will include: arts and crafts, storytelling, role play and educational activity sheets. We also provide toys for children who do not wish to participate in the planned activities, which are age and ability related. By providing a relaxed and fun environment we hope to make the visit experience for children a lot less traumatic.

We are currently in the process of recruiting volunteers who can take part in the children's activities under the supervision

***There should be more of them
to keep the bond with the
fathers and children.***

of a dedicated children's worker.

When children have engaged in craft activities, the results will either be given to their dads, taken home or displayed in the visitors' centre or visits hall. These sessions allow the parents time to discuss matters privately whilst the children are gainfully occupied.

We have recently had the children's play area in the visitors' centre refurbished by "Team Challenge" from Birmingham Voluntary Services Council and it is now a jungle theme play area. The transformation is fantastic and we have received great reviews from children and parents.

All HALOW (Birmingham) staff continue to facilitate family days which are themed and held once a month. We have had excellent feedback from prisoners, families, children and staff. On these occasions both parents are involved in the activities.

**Najuma Mohammed & Sharon Earley,
Co-Managers**



SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Birmingham Visitors' Centre Cont...



The Boy's Brigade & Girls Association, Working in Partnership with HALOW (Birmingham) on Family Days.

The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association is a Christian organisation, open to all, which has been providing fun & challenging activities across the globe since 1883 and work with 46 groups and over 1000 5-18 year olds in Birmingham alone. Through the work we do, many children & young people have the chance to play, have fun & develop at their own pace in a safe environment. Since 2011, we have been one of the stakeholders present at HMP Birmingham Family Days.

The whole day was fantastic and best part was that my husband could play and walk around with his daughter.

Over the past year, we have spent much of our time supporting HALOW (Birmingham) in a couple of different ways. The family days give us a chance to interact with families who are most in need. We support HALOW (Birmingham) with the delivery of activities; one particular highlight being the Olympic themed day.

We have been looking at expanding our work with HALOW (Birmingham) through providing quality activities based on our programme to give families a real flavour of what they could expect if their child attended one of our groups in the community as well as on family days.

Through funding provided by Youth United, we will be able to enhance the quality of the Family Days with a more immersive programme, as well as improving the signposting process to help address the needs of families from outside the city more effectively.

It was brilliant to spend time as a family



The support we have had from the team at HALOW (Birmingham) has been invaluable, always willing to promote us whenever the opportunity arises.

Peter Newton, BB UK Development Worker

The whole day was fantastic and to all of you, thank you so much for your help and support and general kindness throughout this hard time. You are doing a wonderful job. Love and thanks.

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMYOI Brinsford Visitors' Centre



Visitor to Visitor Support Scheme

A visitor requested that a support scheme should be set up within the visitors' centre and notices displayed inviting participation. In discussion I told her that HALOW (Birmingham) had started with a visitor to visitor support scheme in 1980 and this would take us back to our roots.

Thank you very much for all your help on behalf of my son. This made us feel happier knowing he was eating that night.

Notices were displayed inviting visitors to offer help to new arrivals who came on visits to the prison. There was a good response and there is now a list of volunteers who are prepared to listen to new visitors, offering support. This is proving very helpful as those volunteering have been in the same situation as the newcomers. In one instance, a family has made available their telephone number so that those in need can obtain telephone support.

The new arrivals are now offering to help other visitors who are going through the same experience and so the scheme grows.

Family Support Worker

This year we have appointed a family support worker who has been engaged for many years working as a volunteer with the Dudley Youth Offending Service. We have obtained funding from a charitable trust to support this work. This new post has enabled us to offer support and guidance to the visitors on a range of topics and to signpost them to specific organisations for advice and help.

To all of you, thank you so much for your help and support and general kindness throughout this hard time. You are doing a wonderful job. Love and thanks.

We have a number of ROTL (Released on Temporary Licence) prisoners who work in the centre and they too have availed themselves of this service, particularly with regard to accommodation when they leave prison.

We have had useful contacts with the Job Centre Plus, The Shannon Trust, the Booked Visits Line and APVU. Other agencies are presently being approached with a view to offering surgeries within the visitors' centre.



Extract from a letter, received from a mother visiting her son...

"I want to mention a few people who are a credit to Brinsford... also to the girls and guys in the visitors' centre, the caring ladies that sell the drinks and spend time having a chat, making you feel comfortable. All these little things mean so much to a mother of a child that is going through a bad time in life but will hopefully come out a better person which from the letters I receive, tells me he will...keep up the good work... It is very much appreciated".

Signed mother.

Debbie Burton, Manager & Ray Seafield, Deputy Manager

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Featherstone Visitors' Centre



Hidden Sentence

In July both manager and deputy attended the 'Hidden Sentence' training course which we hosted for Action for Prisoners Families, held in our visitors' centre at Featherstone.

HALOW (Birmingham) staff from our other centres also attended as well as people from other local organisations, all of whom have connections with prisoners families as they journey through their very own 'Hidden Sentence'.

The course illustrated the issues faced by families and identified a range of strategies and resources through which they can obtain much needed support through this difficult time.

Snack Bar

At Featherstone we find that people prefer to be greeted and served by a friendly face rather than a vending machine. Due to the remote location of the prison the snack bar is welcomed by visitors, many of whom come for lunch before their visit.

Our snack bar which is fronted by volunteers, provides healthy alternatives to convenience vending machine snacks as we offer freshly made sandwiches, salads, soups, vegetable samosas and fresh fruit, alongside all the usual confectionary. The snack bar is also used by staff from both Featherstone and Oakwood Prisons who appreciate the freshly made food and come over for their lunches or snacks on their breaks.

Our snack bar is rated 5 out of 5 stars by South Staffordshire Environmental Health.

Volunteers

We are supported by a group of 13 dedicated and hard working volunteers who all contribute towards providing a safe and welcoming environment for visitors.

Amongst our group of volunteers which range in age from early 20s right through to late 70s, there are a variety of skills and experience, all of which we draw upon to ensure the successful and smooth running of our centre.

Brenda Hales and Sheila Bradley have both been volunteering for over 10 years with HALOW (Birmingham) and have been at the centre since it first opened in 1997.



"I am a people person and having retired from teaching I wished to fill my days with a project that I felt I could make a difference with; working with prisoners families. I find the work varied, interesting and have made some good friends along the way. I thoroughly enjoy the tasks and have never regretted volunteering in this way."

Brenda Hales

"After I retired I wanted to do some kind of volunteering. Having worked in social services for many years, I wanted to do something different. Helping in a prison visitors' centre seemed to be a good alternative. I enjoy meeting a varied group of people and trying to provide a welcoming and friendly environment for the visitors."

Sheila Bradley

All volunteers are greatly valued for their hard work and give of their time which is very much appreciated. They all receive training and attend regular meetings to enable them to discuss issues and contribute ideas.

Gulzar Jutla, Manager & Victoria Smith, Deputy Manager

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Oakwood Family Pathway Centre



The Family Pathway Centre offers visitors a warm and relaxing environment in which to wait prior to going on their visit. We have been fortunate to receive support from local churches through donations of toys, games and equipment which has helped us to further equip our large play area and to provide age related activities. The staff in the centre provide arts and crafts for children who either keep what they have made or give it to dad during the visit.

The centre continues to work closely with Bromford Support, an agency which helps to provide up to date information on housing, debt, changes in benefits, etc to visitors and prisoners. Aquarius have recently offered their services and will also be attending to help support and advise those who have family members with drug and alcohol related issues.

The Family Pathway Centre is working very closely with the Resettlement Department in the prison to obtain donations of clothing for prisoners who are about to be released.

***First visit to HMP Oakwood ...
I would just like to comment
how friendly and professional
the reception staff were. Very
polite and approachable as
their manner diffused potential
argumentative situations.***

HMIP Report from the Latest Full Report on HMP Oakwood

"The 'Family Pathway Centre' (visitors centre) was an excellent facility, run by the Help and Advice Line for Offenders' Wives (HALOW), who were available before and after visits to offer information, advice and guidance and a signposting service to support agencies. There was a multi-faith room and children's play area, and refreshments were available. Access for visitors with disabilities was good. A support agency, Brompton Support, attended weekly and offered prisoners and their families help with a range of issues, including housing and debt."

***All staff have been very helpful
in the 1 year my son has been
in. Nothing has been too much
trouble for the staff. They are
all very good. More like them
please. Thank you.***

Many of them do not have any suitable clothes to help them to adjust to life outside prison e.g. attending interviews, etc. Our aim is to be able to offer the prisoners a better chance to succeed in the world outside and to raise their self esteem.



SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Oakwood Family Pathway Centre Cont...



Children and Family Services (CAFS)

Children's Day - The Family Pathway Centre is now working in partnership with HMP Oakwood to improve and increase the services for children and family members. We are continuing to run and organise the monthly Children's Day with games, arts and crafts, face painting and family photographs.

Father and Baby Bonding Sessions (FABBS) -

We are now working in partnership with the prison and are engaged in FABBS. We give the dads the opportunity to feed, change nappies, bath, and play with their babies. We have received a large variety of equipment from the local churches such as rockers, play mats, toys etc. One of the activities shortly to be undertaken by the dads is making plaster of paris casts of foot and hand prints for the prisoners to keep. Paediatric first aid will be introduced.

Partner Days - HALOW (Birmingham) staff are due to start their first Partners' Day where we hope to help build and strengthen the relationship between prisoners and their partners. This is an important step as many relationships feel the strain when a partner is in prison. We hope to have games and activities such as Mr and Mrs, quizzes, dance, trust exercises etc.

Teenager Days - In the near future we are hoping to start our first teenager day working in collaboration with the gymnasium staff from the prison. Young people and their dads will engage in physical and fun games such as football, rounders, team building challenges etc. We hope this opportunity will help teenagers to get involved and improve the relationships with their dads.

Oakwood's Got Talent - Kamaria Taylor, Deputy Manager coordinated the first Oakwood's Got Talent with

We would like to say a big thank you to you all for the lovely time we had on the children's day, even though you had loads of kids to cope you with, you make it a brilliant day.

Daniel Daly, Manager, fronting the event. The CAFS team of whom we are a part, set up and ran the show with performances from singers, musicians, magicians, and bands. The Director and members of the Senior Management Team acted as judges and there was a good audience consisting of prisoners, staff, and guests. The awards were made by a prisoner in Oakwood, and John McLaughlin (Director) presented them together with prizes.



We are privileged to work in a prison where HALOW (Birmingham) is valued and has excellent working relationships across many departments, allowing us to help expand the services on offer to visitors and prisoners. Both the prison and HALOW (Birmingham) have a joint vision which is to provide the best possible service to prisoners and their families.

Daniel Daly, Manager & Kamaria Taylor, Deputy Manager

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Stafford Visitors' Centre



CHILDREN



Child visitors

In all our centres we have growing numbers of children visiting prisoners. Over the last year 25,548 children visited our centres. Strengthening family ties has long been our aim in the hope that we can reduce the chance of prisoners re-offending and also break the cycle of intergenerational crime.

"The creativity is well taken care of for all to see by the beautiful pictures around the room. Well done to the staff who encourage these young minds."

Parent's comment

How do we cater for children?

Quite simply provide the things they want to do play, engage in arts and crafts and other activities and enjoy the company of other children.

What do these children see / hear when they visit prisons?

A prison is an adult world and these children are little..... look down and you will see them!!

They see adults, lots of adults who ask questions, who look stern and they see places that look strange.

Children deserve to be heard and listened to, to have their space and do the things that children love to do.

HALOW (Birmingham) can and does provide child friendly visitors' centres.



"My son loves the doll's house.... bells, buzzers and music"

What do children like doing?

- Arts and crafts that are geared to their ages and abilities
- Learn about new things
- Play with toys
- Play games with other children
- Talk with the children's workers
- Have someone to listen to and answer their questions
- Engage in activities using their imagination

What do these children want to see / hear when they visit prisons?

They want to be active, doing/ making something or playing a game. They want to see their work on display. They want to come on another visit and see their work again. Children want to talk to the children's workers and socialise with other children.



Approximately 200 children made use of the play area at Stafford in the first 9 months of 2013, even though we are one of the smaller prisons



How do we do it?

HALOW (Birmingham) has children's workers and volunteers who like working with children.

We have inspirational children's project leaders.

We have funding talents which allow us to acquire the resources needed.

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES

HMP Stafford Visitors' Centre Cont...

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is an important part of our work and enables us to plan and provide activities which meet the needs of individuals and diverse groups of children.

At Stafford, monitoring and evaluation starts at the beginning of each project:

- We assess the needs of the children by observation, talking to the child and discussions with the parent.
- We collect statistical information, both to inform our work and to comply with our funders' requirements.
- We obtain feedback from staff, volunteers, parents, children, our working partners and at times, the prisoners themselves. This is done both verbally and in written form.

Valerie Ledward, Manager



A prisoner's letter sent to HMP Stafford after he had attended a family day...

Come 10am I was sat among fellow inmates awaiting our family as we are the privileged few to be picked for this family visit. This is my first family visit and what a great five hours it was. My wife arrived along with my children and the look on their faces knowing they are here for five hours in the company of daddy was a picture. We all sat down and had a little chat until a member of the help team came around to see us and explain the little projects for myself and the children that we can get involved in.

We started off by painting prints and pictures onto a canvas bag. What a fantastic activity this is as the children had one each and what a great keep sake. I really got involved with it too as we all enjoyed it so much. The children also made a paper dolly character which they made outfits for, with the helpers coming around to see we were ok for materials, glue and glitter. We also used felt colours to colour the dolly in to make it look as lifelike as possible. I got involved with this. Towards the end of this my children decided to colour my finger nails in. My wife and children were so happy. The food at lunch time was plentiful as there was a lot

of it and the canteen shop was also open.

It was also a nice surprise that we had a family photo taken towards the end. My wife also said that was a good thought and it would be nice if I could send the picture home so as to remind them of this day.

So in turn, this day made it great for myself and the children to really bond with plenty of activities to join in on, as it kept us all busy. I really enjoyed the visit. So did my children. My wife even noticed a change in myself whereas I joined in with the children's activities more.

Whilst there are many negatives heard about prison, too few people are willing to talk about the positive things that happen like this family visit day being one. This is a well thought out and organised day and the prison knows that there are family men in here who really do appreciate this wonderful day.

I have to thank the prison and the staff involved with this day on behalf of my family as I do not get to see my children as much as I would like to, due to the travelling long day for them.

Thank you so very much!

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES HMP Stafford Visitors' Centre Cont...

Family Support Worker - A Case Study

A visitor had arrived at the centre on two occasions to visit her partner and having seen the display board advertising our Information and Support Service, had come to discuss an issue. We went through the initial procedures. On the third visit, the visitor now feeling comfortable decided to tell me about her problems with her mortgage arrears.

Her partner had been in full time employment and she had a part time job. They were able to "keep their heads above water" financially, until her partner was convicted. This visitor had now received a letter from her mortgage company informing her of her continued arrears and impending eviction.



Photo with kind permission of HMP Stafford

We talked about how she felt about the situation and what she had done to date to resolve the issue. She felt she was unable to discuss this with her partner as she believed he would be very frustrated and depressed and she did not want to put him in that situation. However, she did say she felt relieved that she had plucked up the courage to share this information and how much better she felt now she had done so.

Whilst she was visiting, information was collected for her and a check list drawn up. On completion of her visit we sat down and I suggested some options to help resolve the matter.

It was agreed that her first task was to respond to the letter from the mortgage company and together we talked about how this could be worded, making sure that they had all the facts regarding her situation. Following this, she was advised to prioritise her debts and I gave her information from where she could get further support.

We also discussed the fact that due to her part time employment and low income, she may be entitled to benefits. This she did not realise.



She arrived at the centre the following week very pleased. She had followed the check list and written to the mortgage company. She had also contacted the agencies I had suggested. The change in her was really heart warming. The following week she returned with a letter stating that the mortgage company was willing to negotiate. It may take a while to resolve and she was not "out of the woods". However, it was a start and it looked promising. Suddenly our visitor was interacting with her fellow visitors and her comment to me was "Thank you so much, the relief now I know I am doing something about the situation is wonderful and at last I am sleeping at night!"

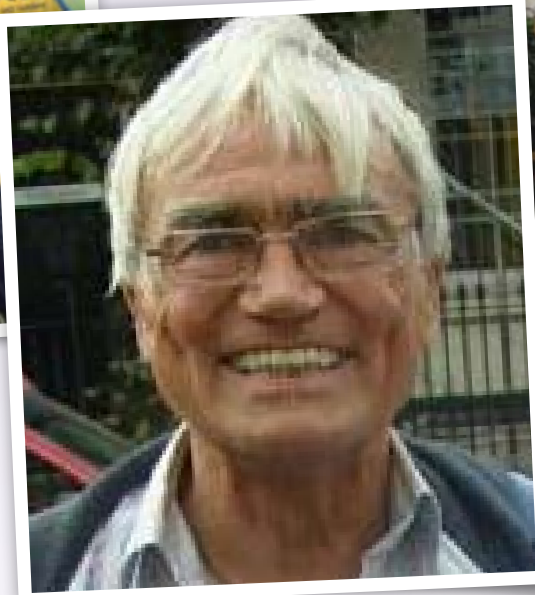
Anna Cottam, Deputy Manager

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Berkswich Mothers' Union has been supporting HALOW (Birmingham) at HMP Stafford for twelve years. We have a team of helpers who regularly manage the tea bar in the visitors' reception and offer light refreshments to families and friends who are visiting the prison, many of whom have had a long journey to reach Stafford.

Mothers' Union is an international Christian missionary charity that works to support families. One of our objectives is to help those whose family life has met with adversity. We hope we do this in the visitors' centre by welcoming visitors to the tea bar with service, a smile and a listening ear. Some of our members knit "comfort teddies" which can be handed out to young children who may feel upset.

Christine Gilson
Chair of Berkswich Mothers' Union Branch



John Holcroft

John was born in Chorley in 1944. He was the son of John and Lena Holcroft and was one of four children.

He was raised in Chorley in Lancashire but then moved to Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire (very proud of this fact). As a young boy, he would salvage the coal from streets and anywhere he could find it, bring it back and use it so that his sisters and mom could warm their feet!

He lied about his age so he could get into the Merchant Navy, so he could travel the world, and he did. After his time travelling he spent some time down in the mines.

He then later moved to Halesowen, Birmingham where he was a self employed builder. He was the father of four children and had six grandchildren.

John had a passion for helping the helpless, taking on the projects that no one else wanted to take on, giving everyone a fair chance at a crack of the whip.

His first venture was to set up an old peoples' home called Somerset House in Handsworth Wood. He then opened the Lady Mary Hospitality Home in Soho Road which later turned into a hostel for ex-offenders.

For a while he had a shop in Handsworth and he converted it into a mini Citizens Advice Bureau giving advice on a range of issues to the local community including the elderly.

He later created a charity called Law Leisure and Learning and acquired 10 Holyhead Road, Handsworth and turned it into a multi-cultural centre which he later gave to Kurdish refugees. He then acquired a centre in Queens Head Road and turned it into an adult centre and later it became a youth training centre (still in action).

His final acquisition was a property in Villa Road, known as the Villa Road Community Hall which is an empowerment centre for local people.

John was for many years a dedicated member of the management committee of HALOW (Birmingham), a charity working with the families of prisoners. He allowed us to use his centre in Queens Head Road for meetings and gave helpful advice to us at all times. He was totally supportive and gave his time willingly. He was a kind man, with a great sense of humour. He was a committed Christian and he lived life to the full. His Christianity informed everything he did for other people.

At his funeral in December 2012 many many people, young and old testified to the fact that his influence had changed their lives for the better. A most remarkable man who is sadly missed!

Thank you John.

ARRIVALS



Baxter Willis (Trustee)

Baxter has joined us after studying Criminology at York University. He works full time as a Communications Consultant for Capgemini where he sits on the Sustainability Board. He is also a member of the Young Trustees Network.



Mairead Montague (Finance Manager)

I was thrilled to be asked to work with HALOW (Birmingham) in July 2012. Since starting work as the Finance Manager I have been continually inspired by the passion and commitment of everyone involved within the organisation. It is a pleasure to be able to work alongside such a hardworking and dedicated group of people.

I have a background in providing the finance function for charity and third sector groups specialising in developing systems and reporting functions. I have worked with groups across the sector with the provision of accounts preparation and production along with working on developing financial controls and improving accountability and governance.

The future plans for HALOW (Birmingham) are very exciting, as they move forward in developing and enhancing the vital services they provide. I am proud to be part of this organisation.



Fayaz Malik (Trustee)

Fayaz is a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants who has worked for various well known organisations in industry & commerce, housing and third sector in the UK and abroad. He is currently working as a business advisor and management consultant internationally, with focus on the UK, India and the Middle East. He has been on the Management Committee/ Board of HALOW (Birmingham) since February 2011 and has enjoyed working with the team, steering the organisation through challenging times. In addition to supporting the families of prisoners, he is keen for HALOW (Birmingham) to develop further services for the families and is engaged in helping with the strategic planning of the organisation.

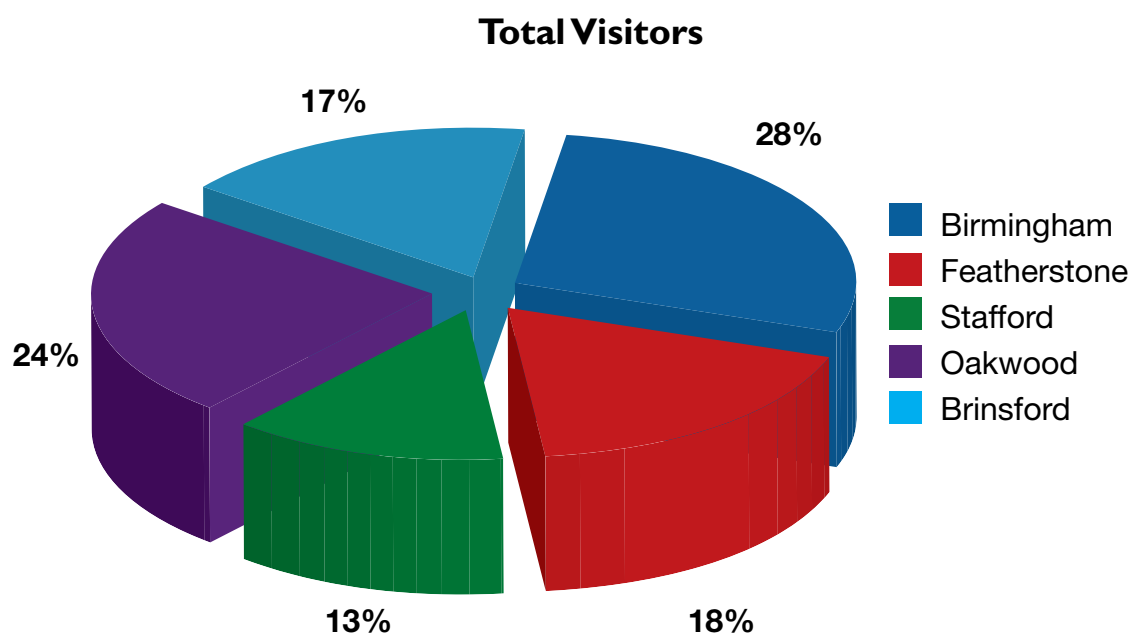


Nirdesh Sandhu (Trustee)

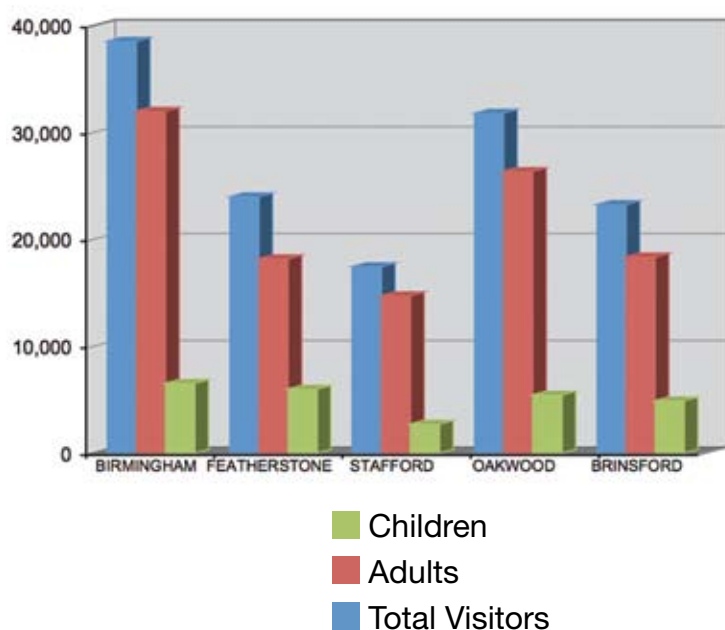
Nirdesh is a member of The Association of Chartered Certified accountants and has a MSc in Public Service Management. Nirdesh joined HALOW (Birmingham) this year with over 30 years experience in finance, management, consultancy and lecturing. She is currently working in association with The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce on a consultancy basis, and is involved in the strategic planning and financing of HALOW (Birmingham).

VISITORS' STATISTICS

Since January 2005 we have counted all the visitors attending the centres which we run, distinguishing between adults and children. For the year 2012-2013 we had a total 135,039 of which 38,498 visitors are for Birmingham which is a significant drop from last year. This was due to the fact that statistics for the previous year were based on the number of bookings, not the actual number of attendees. In Brinsford there were 23,229, in Featherstone 24,067, in Oakwood 31,787 (figures for 10 months only as the centre opened in June 2012) and in Stafford 17,458 visitors.



The number of children who visited was 25,548 which stands at 23.3% which is over 3.5% higher than last year (19.8%). This supported the statement made in the 2012 Annual Report that we needed more activities for young people and children. This we have been addressing.



CENTRES	ADULTS	CHILDREN	TOTAL VISITORS	MONTHLY AVERAGE
BIRMINGHAM	31,995	6,503	38,498	3,208
FEATHERSTONE	18,098	5,969	24,067	2,005
STAFFORD	14,794	2,664	17,458	1,455
OAKWOOD	26,302	5,485	31,787	3,179
BRINSFORD	18,302	4,927	23,229	1,936
TOTALS	109,491	25,548	135,039	11,783

VISITORS' SURVEYS



We regularly carry out surveys of the prison visitors passing through the five centres run by HALOW (Birmingham) to determine some of their characteristics and their views of the services offered. During August 2013 we carried out such a survey with around 1262 forms being completed by the main visitor with a further 768 people accompanying them.

Some of the key characteristics of the visitors surveyed were as follows:-

- **Sex** - 62% of the visitors were female, 4% lower than last year.
- **Age** - Average age of the visitors was 30 with the eldest visitor being 89; similar to last year.
- **Relation to prisoner** - 21% of visitors were children of inmates, 29% were partners/ wives, 19% were friends, 23% were parents and 8% other relatives.
- **Disabled** - 2% declared themselves disabled on the survey, the same as last year.
- **Ethnic origin** - 60% were white, 18% were Asian, 12% were black or mixed and other ethnic groups accounted for the remaining 10% of visitors.
- **Travel arrangements** - The most common mode of transport was the car at 68%, 14% arrived by train and then the remaining visitors arrived by either bike, bus or taxi. The average time it takes a visitor to reach the centre is 45 minutes. Several people stated that it took them in excess of 2 hours to arrive for a visit. The vast majority of visitors came from within the West Midlands and 18% came from outside that area from as far as Scotland to parts of Europe.

Visiting Record

- 11% of visitors were first timers
- Family days - 15% have attended at least one family day, 6% more than last year. 97% of comments about family days were very positive.

Visitors' Centre Facilities

- Centre staff - The overall opinion of the staff was considered to be excellent

- Cleanliness - Areas such as main receptions, refreshment bars and children's play areas were considered to be mainly excellent or good. There were negative comments about the cleanliness of all centres at the weekends.
- Advice and leaflets - There is a wide range of leaflets on display which the majority of visitors deem to be good.

Tea Bar

- The majority of visitors preferred tea bar facilities to vending machine. 80% of visitors regularly use the facility, of which 95 % have said there is a wide range of products for sale at a good and affordable price.
- The overall rating of the facilities provided by tea bar/ cafe was excellent.

Play Areas

- 75% of those who use the play areas rate them as either good or excellent. Those people say that the play area is of great importance to them as it gives them time for the child to play before visiting the prison

Visitor Needs

- Most requests were for a wider range of hot snacks in the cafes/ tea bars, less queuing for visitors, more toys for children and more family days.



Financial Review

Income generated in 2013 has increased significantly from £447,609 in 2012 to £509,524 which now takes HALOW (Birmingham) over the audit threshold. The principal funding source as in previous years is from contracts relating the running of five visitor's centres. The income from our service delivery contracts comes from HM Prisons (MoJ) and G4S contracts this represents 68% of the organisations income. HALOW (Birmingham) has performed well despite operating in a difficult financial climate. 2013 has seen one of our largest contracts with HMP Birmingham suffer a reduction in its annual income, but against the backdrop of limited resources and constraints on funding HALOW (Birmingham) has continued to develop and expand its charitable activities by looking for opportunities to provide practical and responsive support to prisoners' families.

The other significant income stream is provided by operating tea bars at the visitors' centres. This represents almost 30% of our income and has increased from £132,131 in 2012 to £149,645 in 2013 an increase of 9%. The cost of purchasing food supplies for the tea bars has reduced slightly from £90,345 in 2012 to £89,619 indicating that the operation is becoming more sustainable. The committee plan to expand the tea bar operations by opening a tea bar at the Oakwood Family Pathways Centre (August 2013).

Expenditure increased from £445,431 (2012) to £490,768, the majority of this cost (71%) is spent directly on staffing costs providing the front line services and activities at the visitors' centres.

The overall improved performance of the centres is due in no small part to the tireless dedication and commitment of the staff and volunteers. In total over 3,200 days of volunteer time has been contributed this year, an invaluable resource without which the charity would be unable to function sustainably.

HALOW (Birmingham) received a grant income of £6,000 from the Tudor Trust which was designated to improving governance, £2,250 from charitable trusts including W.A.Cadbury Trust and Waitrose Community Matters Fund which contributed towards the costs of our family day activities held at the centres.

The amount of unrestricted funds held by HALOW (Birmingham) has increased from £93,353 (2012) to £111,386 in 2013.

Reserves Policy

The total unrestricted reserves for 2013 are £111,386. This is sufficient to cover three months running costs as well as any outstanding financial obligations. The management committee will review this contingency as and when circumstances arise.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2013

	Notes	Total 2013 £	Total 2012 £
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
Voluntary income:			
Donations and grants		2,250	1,500
Bank and other interest		418	255
Incoming resources from charitable activities			
Grants	1	357,167	314,223
Visitors' Centres tea bars		149,645	132,131
		<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		509,524	447,609
		<hr/>	<hr/>
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Charitable activities:			
Tea bars expenses		89,619	90,345
Visitor Centres services		371,557	324,640
Governance costs	2	29,592	30,446
		<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		490,768	445,431
		<hr/>	<hr/>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		18,756	2,178
FUND BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD		93,353	91,175
		<hr/>	<hr/>
FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 MARCH 2012	3	£112,109	£93,353
		<hr/>	<hr/>
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2013			
		2013 £	2012 £
FIXED ASSETS		749	264
CURRENT ASSETS:			
Short term investment		-	50,137
Debtors		36,742	17,842
Cash at bank and in hand		97,833	72,923
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		134,575	140,902
CREDITORS: Amounts falling Due within one year		23,215	47,813
		<hr/>	<hr/>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		111,360	93,089
		<hr/>	<hr/>
NET ASSETS	3	£112,109	£93,353
		<hr/>	<hr/>

Independent Examiner: Slater Johnstone, Chartered Accountants, Solihull

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Grant | Unrestricted £337,227; Restricted £19,940 |
| 2. Governance | Unrestricted £7,376; Restricted £22,216 |
| 3. Net Assets/Funds B/fwd. | Unrestricted £111,386; Restricted £723 |

HALOW

(Birmingham)



HALOW (BIRMINGHAM) is grateful for support from:

- Action for Prisoners' Families
- Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP
- Aquarius
- The Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust
- Baron Davenports Charity
- Birmingham City Council, Foundation Years Parenting Support Team – Team Challenge
- Birmingham Information Service
- Birmingham Voluntary Services Council (BVSC)
- Blakemore Foundation
- AF Blakemore & Sons Ltd



- The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association in Birmingham
- Bromford Support
- Cabinet Office Transition Fund (managed by the Big Fund)
- Capgemini UK Plc
- Cheslyn Hay Sport & Community High School
- Citizens Advice Bureau





- Esme Fairbairn Foundation
- HMP Birmingham – G4S (Care & Justice Services)
- HMYOI Brinsford – Ministry of Justice
- HMP Featherstone – Ministry of Justice
- HMP Oakwood – G4S (Care & Justice Services)
- HMP Stafford – Ministry of Justice
- Job Centre Plus
- The John Sandy Trust
- Law, Leisure & Learning
- Lifeline Drugs, Alcohol Recovery Service (DARS) Team
- Lloyds TSB Foundation for England & Wales
- The Mothers' Union
- Peninsula Business Services
- Ranger Service, Staffordshire County Council
- Shannon Trust

- Smarter Choice Team
- St Giles Church, Willenhall
- St Nicholas Church, Wolverhampton
- Tesco, Yardley, Birmingham
- Toe-to-Toe Reading Scheme
- The Tudor Trust
- W A Cadbury Trust
- Waitrose Community Matters



**The National Offenders' Families Helpline
offers information and support from arrest
through to release and beyond.**

Email: info@offendersfamilieshelpline.org

Website: www.prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk

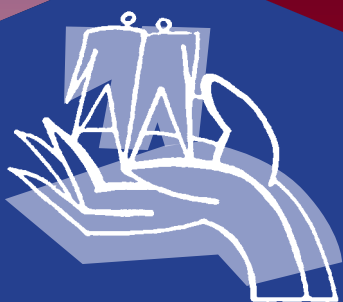
Telephone: 0808 808 2003



Information



**Help and Advice
Line for Offenders'
Wives, Partners
and Families**



HALOW
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