



# Welcome to Session 3: Action

**The Prisons Awareness Course**

*Updated Jan 22*

*The Welcome Directory. Helping faith communities welcome and support people leaving prison*



# Aims & Objectives

For faith communities to explore the connections between who faith communities are at their best and some of the themes that recent research has shown to help someone leaving prison make a new life that is free from crime.

## The aims of this session are to:

- Understand the importance of creating safe communities and a safeguarding culture
- Explore who we are as a faith community
- Consider how 'who we are' might help a prison leaver with faith thrive as they work to re-establish their lives in the community and how we can respond
- Understand the powerful role that faith communities can play in resettlement and transformation
- Understand what is expected of faith communities and how to register
- Recognise the different options for action and resources available
- Re-reflect on attitudes towards prison and prisoners



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# Overview

- Welcome & Introductions
- Who We Are
- Safeguarding
- Reflections & Activities
  - Trusting the 'Untrustworthy'
  - Unlocking the Second Prison
  - Experience Q&A
  - Ending Place Survey
- Next Steps & Questions





# Who We Are

Faith communities can offer a spiritual home, a friendly community of steady and supportive relationships as well as appropriate practical assistance to people leaving prison.

Research has shown that aspects that faith communities have to offer are important to help people leaving prison to build towards a new life that is free from crime.







# Safeguarding

## Creating Safe Communities

- What does safety for prison leavers with faith look like?
- What does safety for faith communities look like?

## Is there a place for trust?

- Research shows that well placed trust is important in building healthy communities
- Diligent & informed trust not blind trust or mistrust
- Placing trust is a good bet





# Safeguarding

## Safeguarding – Working With All Prison Leavers

- The Welcome Directory does not make referrals
- An opportunity to review existing procedures and liaise with any relevant Safeguarding Advisors for your faith/denomination
- Resources at NSPCC Learning, Unlock, ThirtyOneEight & our website
- References and Feedback





# Safeguarding

## High Risk Offences

- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- License conditions
- ViSOR database
- Engage with relevant statutory bodies
- Templates (contracts etc.)



# Trusting the 'Untrustworthy'



*"It's hard to distinguish rumour from a report, fact from fiction, reliable source from dis-informant, truth teller, from deceiver. A crisis of trust can't be overcome by a blind rush to play small trust. Our ambition is not to place trust blindly as small children do, but with good judgement."* Onora O'Neill, 2002



## Talking points:

- Describe a time **when you trusted someone** and there was a positive outcome or when you trusted someone and there was a negative outcome.
- In what ways **does your faith/ beliefs help you develop trust** with people who have been untrustworthy?
- What ways can you **practically and wisely build trusting relationships** with people who have left prison?





# Local Support & Advice

- Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the appropriate statutory authority. Find out what your local links are for relevant support, e.g. mental health/addiction.
- Transparent working with Probation Officers is always best as they will have information of good local resources.



# Conflict of Interest

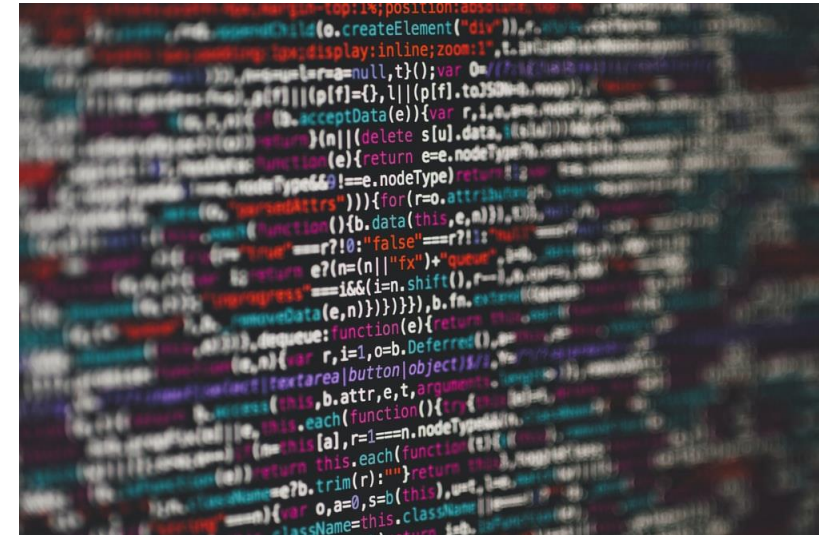
- Within the prison
- Within the faith community
- Specific to prison/probation service employees





# Data

- The information in the directory is made available to:
  - Prison chaplains
  - Probation and resettlement teams
  - Prison leavers themselves
- What is publicly available on our directory
- Consider what data is included on your own websites





# Unlocking the Second Prison

“As I walked out the door towards the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew that if I didn’t leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I’d still be in prison.”

**Nelson Mandela**

“Change happens when we treat people as people with whom we build relationships. Investing time, energy and resources in the individual offender can lead to the kinds of transformation and reconciliation that other rehabilitation programmes could never achieve.”

**The Archbishop of Canterbury**



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# Unlocking the Second Prison

## People

- Positive steady relationships, parental figures, support structures
- Participating in community, sense of belonging
- People from all walks of life

## Faith

- Promoting positive beliefs about love, compassion, peace and hope
- Positive self image that underlines worth and enhances self esteem
- Gives structure to our lives
- Practical application of learning to apply values and beliefs to everyday challenges e.g. money matters, disagreements

## Action

- Find opportunities to make a difference in the wider community
- Sense of purpose beyond ourselves and motivation for change
- Using talents and strengths for good



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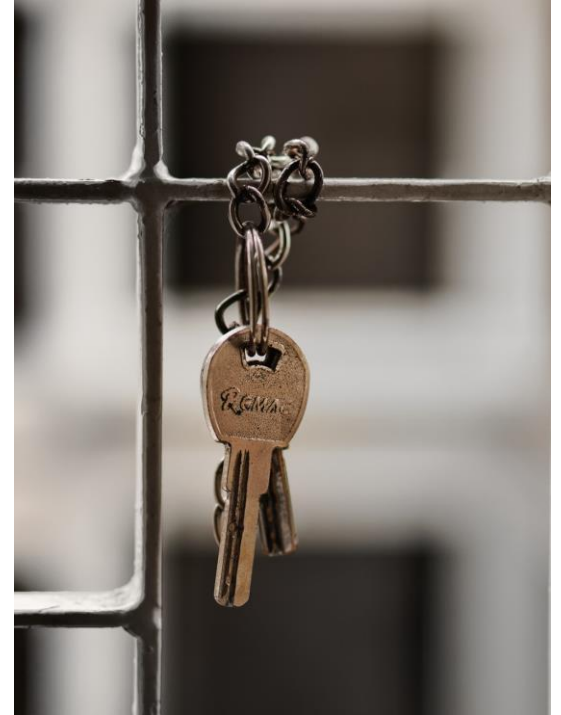
# Unlocking the Second Prison



Consider this quote: **“People transform themselves, we either facilitate it or hinder it.”**

## Talking points:

- **How do you respond to the quote? Why?**
- **Why do you think people who have left prison find it difficult to ‘turn their lives around’?**
- **What attitudes, in faith communities, can help people who have left prison embrace the transforming nature of faith or hinder their personal transformation?**



**Important question: How do we put those attitudes into practice?** (When it comes to community/ friendship, spiritual development, and putting your faith into action)

# Experience

From one of our trustees...



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# Helping connect prison leavers with your welcoming faith community!



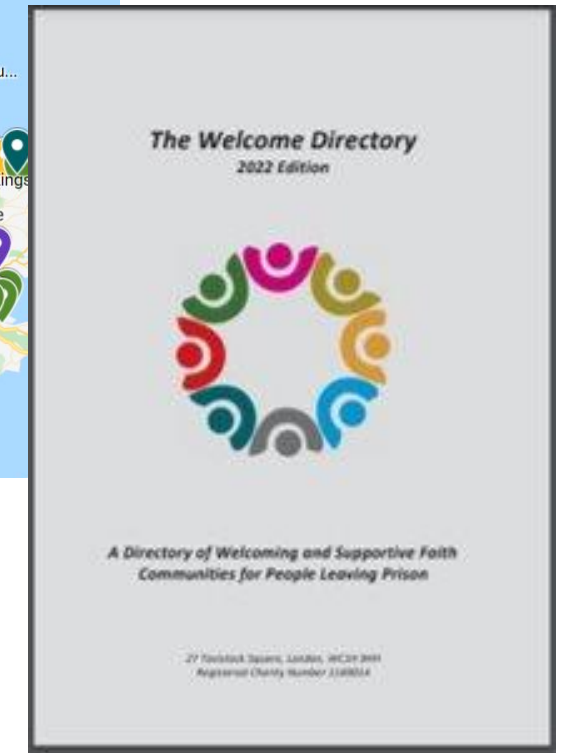
**Searchable Online Map** - Our website includes a searchable map, displaying all registered faith communities

**Physical Directory** - A physical copy of the registered faith communities

This enables **prison leavers, chaplaincy and resettlement teams** to easily identify welcoming faith communities beyond the gates and **empowers them to make their own decision...**



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# Practical pointers to developing a welcoming faith community....



- Be yourselves: welcoming and accepting!
- Explore for yourself what engagement looks like for your faith community
- Consider what you do well and the strengths amongst your members to offer supportive developmental relationships
- Think about developing skill-sets, experience, support or advice in any of the 7 pathways to reducing re-offending
- Allow time: trusting relationships are not built in a day!
- Create a lists of organisations who prison leavers can be referred to for professional support
- Register with The Welcome Directory!



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# How Do I Register My Faith Community?



- **Policy** for Safeguarding and named lead
- **Permission** from Senior Faith Leader
- **Point of Contact** or 'Champion' who will advocate on issues relating to prisons within the faith community
- **Prison Link**, either through volunteering at a local prison, **Previous significant experience** or completing the **Prisons Awareness Course**





# Taking Things Further



Community Chaplaincy Association



## Stay Informed

Attend 'Welcome Directory Connections' Zooms

Sign up to the newsletter

## Pray Do

Tell others who may be interested

Register

Become an Ambassador

## Give



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# Ending Place Survey

## **Note your position between 1 and 7**

1. If someone who has left prison came to your faith community would you...  
*(1 keep your distance/ 7 accept them)*
2. If someone who had left prison told you their story would you...  
*(1 be sceptical/ 7 seek to understand)*
3. In your heart of hearts how do you feel towards people with a criminal past...  
*(1 judgemental/ 7 impartial)*
4. If someone who had left prison and sought your help would you...  
*(1 point them in the direction of others/ 7 offer care and support)*
5. If someone who had left prison sought your friendship would you...  
*(1 keep them at arms length/ 7 be open to being a friend)*
6. If someone told you that they had been to prison would you allow that information...  
*(1 influence the present/ 7 be left in the past)*



# Ending Place Survey

## Complete the sentence

7. Prison is .....
8. Someone who has left prison .....
9. If someone who has left prison wanted to become a member of your faith community they would .....

What do you intend to do differently having completed the three sessions?





# Summary

- How to create safe communities as well as welcoming ones
- How faith communities support in personal transformation
- Understanding of the strengths of faith communities being made up of People of Faith who take Action
- How to be a part of a rehabilitation revolution!
- Where to go if you want more information
- Changes in perspective
- **THANK YOU!**



# Questions

