

# The Voice Project

A unique partnership between Victim Support and HMP Holme House; providing victims of Domestic Violence and Harassment with Practical support when the offender is in custody at HMP Holme House.

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## Introduction

- A unique partnership between Victim Support and HMP Holme House
- Prison engagement began the middle of April 2012
- A unique type of support
- Establishing the needs of service users and the need to establish links with services in the Community

# Community Action Against crime innovation Fund

- Fund was launched in September 2011 to for voluntary and community groups to develop new ways of working to cut crime and keep communities safe.
- Fund was worth £10 million – over £70 million was requested through over 1,600 applications
- Applied to the Reducing Re-offending strand – offering a unique and innovative partnership approach with three clear aims:
  - Reduce victim vulnerability and repeat victimisation in relation to harassment and domestic violence – increase communication with victims of crime
  - Enhance the work of HMP Holme House regarding reducing re-offending by supporting restorative practice
  - Increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system and victim services

## Prison Engagement

- In house referral process established within the Public Protection Unit following reception of a new prisoner
- Target group:  
*Victims relating to a case where the prisoner is in custody for an impending Domestic Violence offence or impending/ current restraining order/ non-molestation order is in place*
- In the majority of cases, the prisoner is serving less than 12 months
- Support offered to victims when the prisoner has been or is awaiting sentencing

## Prison Engagement

- In the first quarter, **123** victims have been contacted via letter
- In **55** of the cases, there was either no telephone number or the telephone number was incorrect when tried to ring
- **38** victims have either rang or have been contacted for telephone support
- Emotional and Practical support given to victims (in relation to prison procedures and possible signposting to other services)

## Visitor Centre Drop in

- Began beginning of August 2012
- Team Victim Support volunteers who are Domestic Violence trained
- Awareness raising
- Offer victims emotional and practical support
- Signpost and possibly refer with specialist services

## Community Engagement

- Another key element of the project
- Opportunity to link in with services in the Community
- Providing information to others
- Supporting individuals
- Consultation
- Voice Project Steering Group (deciding and acting together)

## Impact of Crime Sessions with offenders

- To begin delivery August / September 2012
- Awareness raising to offenders of the impact of crime on victims
- Target group: *serving under 12 months*



## Summary

- Positive engagement so far with victims
- Short term focus:
  - To establish positive partnerships with key services in the community
  - Promote the drop in sessions at the Visitors centre
  - Establish the delivery of offender awareness sessions
  - Key representation at the Voice Projects steering group
- Long term focus:
  - To secure funding to sustain the project
  - Further Restorative Justice practices at HMP Holme House

Any questions?