



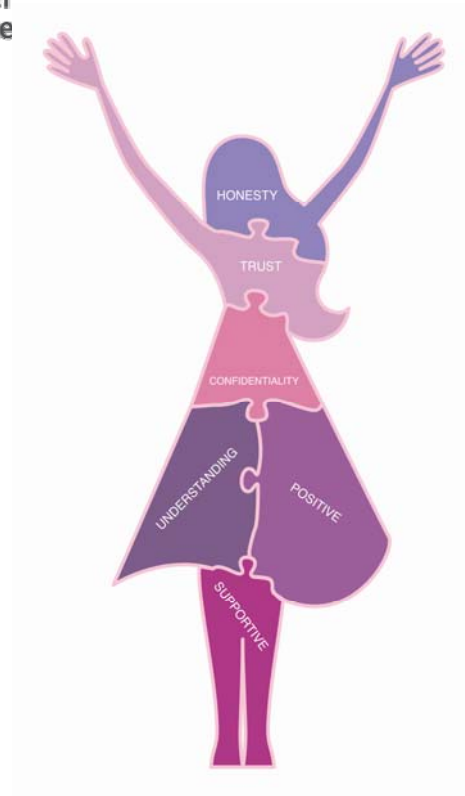
Ministry of  
**JUSTICE**

National Offender  
Management Service



Gweinyddiaeth  
**CYFIAWNDER**

Gwasanaeth Rheoli  
Troseddwyr Cenedlaethol



## Women's Turnaround Project Service Delivery Model



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## 1. Introduction

The Women's Turnaround Project (WTP) was launched in Cardiff in November 2007 with the aim of providing Welsh women offenders and women at risk of being an offender and/or victim of crime with a multi-agency, community-based service that addresses individual risks and needs.

WTP was commissioned by NOMS Cymru in response to the recommendations in The Corston Report 2007 which highlighted the need for a "distinct, radically different, visibly-led, strategic, proportionate, holistic, women-centred, integrated approach". Among the recommendations was the need for a "fundamental re-thinking" about the way in which services for vulnerable women, particularly for those with mental health and/or substance misuse issues, are provided and accessed. WTP was designed to address this need and thereby provide a holistic, needs-based, client-centred, multi-agency approach to provide support for women offenders and women at risk of offending and/or being a victim of crime (henceforth, vulnerable women).

WTP provides services for vulnerable women in a safe, non-intimidating, environment where they can be helped to identify their problems and develop solutions for them. An out-reach service is also available as part of a wider support plan. WTP offers support and advice on a wide range of issues including: legal matters, housing, education and training, employment, family and relationships, health, finance and substance misuse problems.

Additionally, WTP is able to assist with bail, remand and post-release accommodation; a housing option, through the BASS/Clear Springs contract, has been developed to run alongside the WTP providing accommodation for women either on bail or when released from custody on home detention curfew.

In October 2008 WTP linked with the Intensive Alternative to Custody pilot sites in South Wales and Dyfed-Powys with WTP key workers providing court assessments on women at risk of short term custody in these pilot areas.

Following additional funding and support from the Welsh Assembly Government, Ministry of Justice and NOMS Cymru WTP is now expanding Services across Wales.

This document is intended to offer a full description of WTP to enable practitioners and stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the project and referral process for women who need to access the services provided.

## 2. Purpose of the Women's Turnaround Project

To WTP provides support and services for women offenders and those at risk of offending in a safe, non-threatening environment so they can be helped to identify their problems and a tailored response is developed to address individual needs instead of a 'one size fits all' approach.

### **Aims:**

- To develop, deliver and evaluate a woman-centred project addressing the needs and risks of vulnerable women In Wales using a multi-agency approach;
- To provide services in a safe, non threatening environment;
- To deliver a sustainable reduction in women's needs and vulnerabilities;

### **The aims will be achieved by:**

- i. A team of keyworkers, employed by WTP, to work with the service user to identify and prioritise their risks and needs and produce a tailored support plan that is reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate interventions, services and levels of support are being accessed.
- ii. Developing an approach that signposts women to services appropriate to their offending behaviour and journey, from prevention and diversion from custody to resettlement on release.
- iii. Drawing together services in the community that provide interventions to address issues such as social legal advice, mental health, drug misuse, physical and sexual abuse, family support, housing, education, training and employment and ensure they are appropriate and co-ordinated to meet the needs of women in Wales. Effective liaison between all agencies and organisations will be key, especially links with probation, prisons and non-criminal justice agencies providing community interventions and services for women.
- iv. Providing interventions for women offenders and women seen as at risk of offending, to deliver a sustainable reduction in women's vulnerability, offending and thereby reducing the incarceration rates for those women who pose no risk to society.

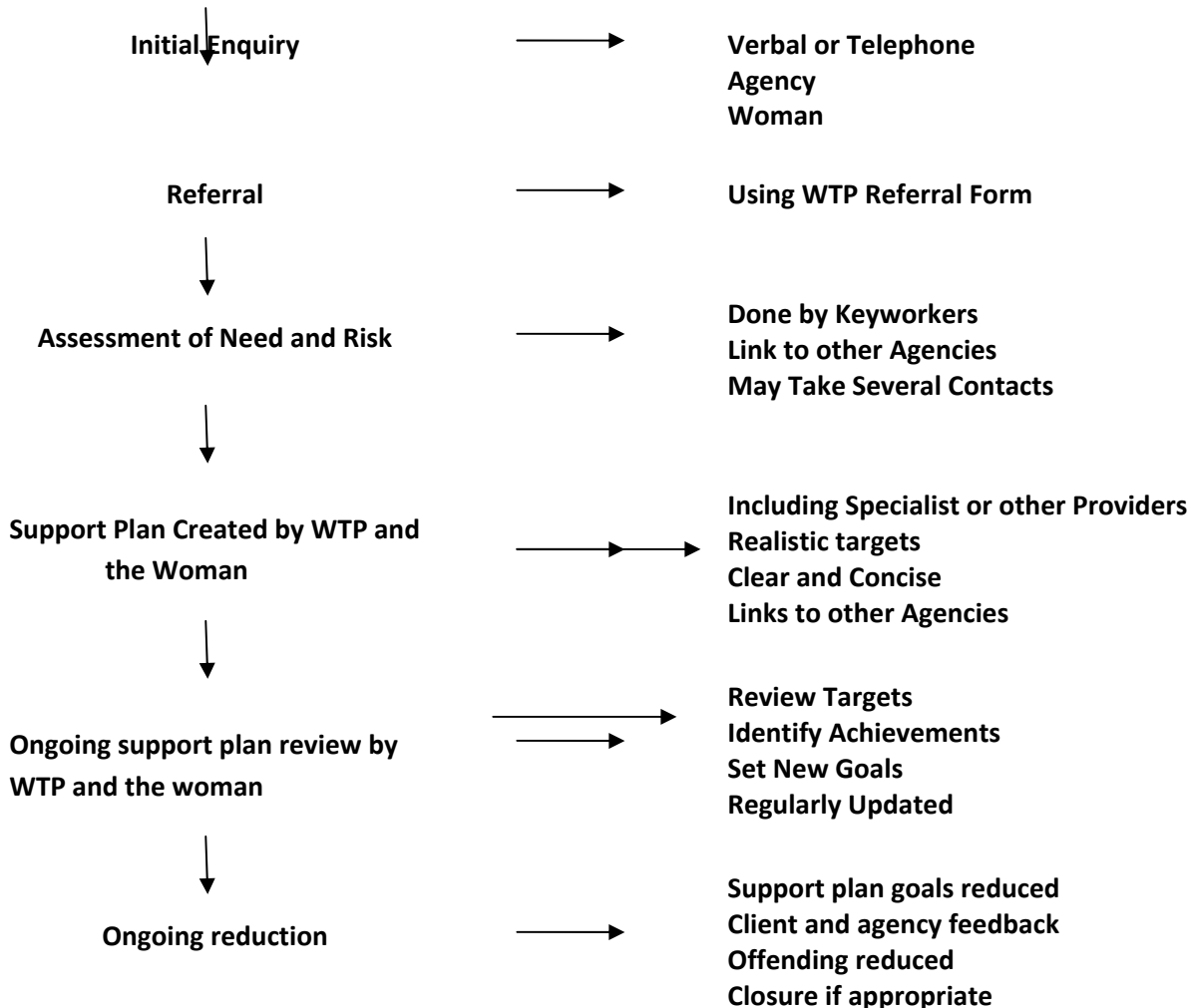
The WTP team consists of staff from a variety of backgrounds whose experience includes prison service, probation and social care delivery. All staff are trained, professional and dedicated to empowering women to regain control of their lives and their futures.

WTP builds on good practise, identifying and resolving gaps in services. Links have already been made and continue to be developed with relevant statutory, voluntary and criminal justice agencies across Wales.

### 3. Accessing the Women's Turnaround Project

Access to WTP is by referral only, with participation being on a voluntary basis. All referrals are assessed and risks identified. A thorough assessment of need will be carried out with each woman to identify her problems and help her find solutions; ensuring her identified needs are effectively met.

The process adopted by WTP is outlined below and more detail is provided in the following sections.



### 4. Eligibility

The following women already within the criminal justice system are eligible for referral:

- Women serving community sentences;
- Women due for release from custody and returning to Wales;
- Women on bail / remand;
- Women arrested;
- Community referrals (Drug / alcohol teams, community safety, Housing etc).

## **Women at risk of, or experiencing one or more of the following:**

- Homelessness
- Drug misuse
- Alcohol misuse
- Mental Health
- Offending (either self or within the family)
- Acute family / relationship crises
- Child protection / child in need
- Debt / poverty / financial
- Domestic violence
- Abuse
- Self harm
- Unemployment / training / learning needs
- Low self esteem / self worth
- Prostitution
- Anti social behaviour

WTP accept that women experiencing one or more of the above issues will not necessarily result in them offending. However, the assessment process aims to identify women who, without preventative interventions around these areas may result in them being at risk of offending.

## **5. How WTP will work alongside women**

### **i. Assessment**

Each woman undertakes an in-depth assessment of her needs to explore areas in which support is required.

### **i. Support Plan**

Once assessed, the woman and her keyworker devise an achievable, task orientated support plan that sets out goals and identifies who is responsible for them. The plan is reviewed regularly to monitor progress and identify barriers.

A key element of the work undertaken by the keyworker is to empower the service user, build confidence and self esteem, promoting self worth and increase personal development opportunities.

Progress is measured through an assessment of the 'distance travelled' against each need identified whilst the woman is in contact with the project.

## **ii. Work undertaken with the women**

All women accepted onto the project are allocated a keyworker with whom they receive regular 1:1 sessions. The length of these sessions depends on the level of support required.

Outreach support is available for women who do not live nearby or who cannot easily access the centre.

## **6. Dealing with Resistance and Non Engagement**

Engagement with WTP is voluntary and key workers encourage women to use the full range of services offered by the project. Women are supporting to try something new; to maximise opportunities and tackle the key issues affecting their ability to live stable and productive lives.

There is emphasis on supporting women to identify and build on their strengths, to motivate and develop positive lifestyle changes and empower them in building confidence and self esteem.

WTP generally engage with women who have had negative experiences of life or services in the past. They may not want to engage, present barriers or even diversionary tactics – all of which are natural and understandable strategies.

Where women present resistance or barriers, WTP adopt a number of strategies to engage her including the use of tools and models of support, motivational interviewing, group work and 1:1 sessions. WTP also use a variety of venues, a mobile office, partner agencies and negotiations to steer the woman in to the most appropriate support packages tailored to meet their individual needs.

Currently the women engage voluntarily with the Project and if they choose to disengage no formal sanction is imposed. Nevertheless, those who have disengaged are sent a letter advising them that the Project and staff are willing to help if needed in the future.

## **7. Diversity and Inclusion**

WTP aims to offer services to all women who have offended or who are at risk of offending and require support to address their issues. WTP works with women from a range of communities and backgrounds, ensuring support packages are tailored to meet individual needs.

There is a strong commitment to deliver a service that is inclusive and to address barriers that have previously prevented women from accessing services. The outreach element of WTP is designed to support women who may have difficulty attending the centre for practical or emotional reasons. If a woman is already accessing a separate project and wishes to receive

additional help from WTP, a key worker from WTP will work out of that centre. For example, the WTP keyworker can work out of another centre that provides cultural and language support to women

## **8. Benefits of The Women's Turnaround Project**

### **i. Accommodation**

**Outcome:** Women living in safe, suitable and sustainable accommodation

**Achieved by:**

Engaging with women in custody that are being released with no fixed abode.

Signposting and referring women to housing providers

Attendance with women at meetings with housing providers

Enabling women to maintain tenancy by referral to tenancy support services

Supporting women to complete benefit forms

Assisting women to access accommodation linked to WTP via Clearsprings for HDC and Bail

### **ii. Employment, Training and Education (ETE):**

**Outcome:** Achieving education, training and employment goals

**Achieved by:**

Supporting women to gain access to further education and adult learning centres

Signposting to careers advisors and employment providers to enable women to return to work / secure employment

Increasing women's ability to access and attend college

Increasing women's ability to access and achieve literacy and numeracy skills

### **iii. Health:**

**Outcome:** Awareness of health needs and access to primary healthcare and other health support

**Achieved by:**

Registration with GP

Attendance at a GP surgery with the woman

Support to attend Community Mental health Teams resulting in women being correctly diagnosed and receiving necessary medication.

Registration and attendance with a dentist

Registration and attendance with an optician

Registration and attendance at a sexual health clinic

**iv. Drugs and Alcohol**

**Outcome:** Women to be free of dependency on drugs and / or Alcohol

**Achieved by:**

Women accessing detoxification provision, including prescribing services through GP, voluntary and statutory agencies.

Women accessing counselling

Referral and support to attend self help groups

**v. Finance Benefit and Debt**

**Outcome:** Women becoming financially stable and gaining independence.

**Achieved by:**

Access and advice on benefits together with registration for benefits

Completion of benefit forms including community care grants, disability living allowance and applications for social funds

Meeting with debt counsellors

Negotiation of payment plans for outstanding debts i.e. To the courts, housing providers and utility services

Support to open a bank account

Signposting to benefits advisor i.e. law centre, welfare rights, citizens advice bureau.

**vi. Children, Families and Relationships**

**Outcome:** Developing and maintaining appropriate, supportive and positive relationships within the family

**Achieved by:**

Working with Social Services and mothers of children who are on the child protection register.

Working with women whose children are in foster placement.

Attendance at Core group meetings, case conferences, care proceedings and planning meetings.

Attendance at Looked After Children (LAC) reviews.

Women able to access community based mother and toddler group.

Referring women for family mediation.

**vii. Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour**

**Outcome:** Women s offending and make positive life choices.

**Achieved by:**

Self esteem and confidence building

Pro social modelling.

In partnership with Probation women accessing accredited programmes.

Referral to cognitive behavioural therapy.

Improvement of life skills

**viii. Supporting women who have been abused, raped or experienced domestic violence**

**Outcome:** Women are healthy, safe and able to access support

**Achieved by:**

Attendance at MARAC

Referral and support to attend sexual assault referral centres

Referral and support to attend Women’s Safety Unit / Women’s Aid to create safety plans for women experiencing domestic violence.

Counselling with specialist providers.

Relocking of home to allow the woman to safely remain in her own home.

**ix. Supporting women who are or have been involved in prostitution.**

**Outcomes:** Women are healthy, safe and able to move out of prostitution.

**Achieved by:**

Attendance at prostitution forums.

Increasing women’s awareness of being able to make positive choices to exit prostitution.

Referral to appropriate specialist support i.e. StreetLife.

## 9. Women who have Engaged / are Engaging with WTP

### Quotes from the women

*"Many other agencies have tried to crack this nut but WTP has smashed it wide open."*

*"Thank you for giving me a reason to wake up and face another day."*

*"Just wanted to say thank you for all WTP has done for me, don't know what I would have done without you. Gonna be one of your success stories, promise!"*

*"WTP has provided me with support, guidance and encouragement when I have been at my most vulnerable. They are helping me to rebuild my life. I now know I'm not alone."*

*"There's plenty of agencies to help you come off drink and drugs but nobody teaches you how to live your life without them."*

*Text received after initial visit. This woman had received a Probation Order following a conviction of Drink Driving. "Thank u so much 4 yesterday, I feel so much better 2day just knowing I'm only public enemy number 3 or 4! Thanks again."*

*Text received after initial involvement began. "Once again Im very grateful 4 ur help its realy nice to know that u have the time to help n support me THANK YOU VERY MUCH "*

*Text received after attending Magistrates Court with client and advising Court of WTP involvement. "Thanks so much 4 comin with me 2day i realy apriciate it ur a star. Cu thur. "*

## **Pen Picture Vanessa**

Vanessa was referred to the Women's Turnaround Project in March 2008 as she needed a focal point for support.

Her initial assessment identified support need requirements with alcohol dependency, childhood sexual abuse; threats to her accommodation, the need to purposefully occupy her day and improve her educational skills and also to build on her relationship with her son who is in foster care.

Vanessa had a physically and emotionally abusive upbringing. She was sexually abused from the age of 3. Aged 10, she started self harming by overdosing after her Father introduced her to alcohol as he 'found it funny' to see her drunk. Aged 12 her drinking increased as she realised that when she was drunk the hurt she was feeling from her abusive past reduced, or at least appeared to, and this set the pattern for her life. She was classed as alcohol dependant at the age of 15 years by her school and the Police and this was also the start of her offending behaviour.

Vanessa has engaged well with WTP and has maintained regular contact; on average twice a week. Her confidence, self esteem and belief in herself have increased dramatically.

Vanessa has made very good progress in understanding how much she depends on alcohol and how her rationalisation and decision making skills deteriorate when she is under the influence and now has a greater awareness of how her actions impact on others. Though she has reduced the amount of alcohol she drinks she is realistic and knows she won't be able to abstain on her own so she is currently working with Community Addictions Unit to address her alcohol dependency

Vanessa has been receiving weekly counselling to help her gain closure on her past from Newpathways, a project that provide support for people who have been affected by rape, sexual abuse or trauma.

She has been working well with her Son's Social Worker and has twice a week regular unsupervised contact her son who is now 13 years old. Her relationship with her son is strong and they remain close.

She has been successful in maintaining her tenancy and is now discussing options to move as she is aware of the negative impact her peers have on her. She has gained self confidence and will now speak out for herself in an appropriate and constructive manner, rather than let people 'walk all over her'.

Vanessa has been attending education classes and is extremely proud of the progress she has made to date as she has recently passed literacy and numeracy level 1, also numeracy level 2. She is currently working on literacy level 2 and remains very committed to doing this. Her next personal goal in improving her education qualifications is to study IT.

Vanessa has a history of offending, all offences being committed while she was under the influence of alcohol and though she has not abstained from alcohol, she has reduced the amount she drinks and she has not committed any further offences against a person since her involvement with WTP.

## **Pen Picture Yasmin**

Yasmin aged 29 was referred to WTP by her local probation office in February 08. She was on Probation for assaulting an ex boyfriend.

She was referred as her officer had concerns about Yasmin's personal safety having been a long term victim of Domestic and financial abuse. She was in debt and faced serious risk of homelessness.

Following an in depth assessment it came to light that Yasmin was facing eviction due to an accumulation of rent arrears.

She had no income and had been relying on the good will of friends.

She had lost all confidence, suffered low self esteem and felt unable to claim benefit due to the complexity of the system.

She was not confident enough to seek medical advice in relation to her poor mental and physical health.

Yasmin also faced court for a further minor offence and had already missed her weekly probation appointment therefore faced the prospect of a short custodial sentence.

WTP's first task, with Yasmin's co-operation, was to prioritise which of her problems needed resolving first.

Telephone calls were immediately made to instigate a claim for Incapacity benefit in conjunction with this Yasmin would need to see her GP to obtain a medical certificate.

Further calls were made to liaise with her Housing Association in order to discuss a backdated claim for Housing Benefit which would effectively cancel out arrears and save her from eviction.

Probation were contacted to explain why Yasmin had missed her last appointment and an arrangement was made for a worker to accompany her on the next appointment so as her officer could be fully updated on the current issues affecting Yasmin and how we intend to support Yasmin in resolving them.

During the first four weeks of support Yasmin's key worker was also able to accompany her to meet with her GP, the Benefits Agency, Probation, her housing officer and the Magistrates Court. Whilst at Court the Key Worker was able to provide Magistrates with a detailed report of how Yasmin's social circumstances had led her to offend, also that Yasmin had asked for help and was willing to engage with support in order to rebuild her life. As a result of this Yasmin was given a Community Based sentence which would allow her to continue accessing support from WTP and other agencies.

Now almost a year has passed and although Yasmin has not been well enough to return to work she has, with the support of WTP, been able to secure a safer home, away from the vicinity of her ex partner. She has also been able to address both her mental and physical health issues thus rebuilding her confidence and is now able to attend some of her appointments alone.

To date she has not committed any further offences.

## **Pen Picture Moira**

Moira aged 46 was referred to WTP by her probation officer in August 2008. She has a long history of shoplifting offences, after her brother first encouraged to start shoplifting at aged fourteen. She received a 12 month suspended prison sentence in July 2007 for wounding/inflicting GBH (S.20) on her partner. The prison term was activated in January 2008 due to further shoplifting offences.

Moira is a victim of abuse by her mother, father, brother and step father. She was and still is a victim of domestic violence from both her first husband and current husband. Moira lost her son aged 21 from a heroin overdose. This fact coupled with the years of abuse has had a very negative impact on her emotional wellbeing. With WTP's support she is about to undertake counselling with Cruse to help her cope with her grief. WTP has arranged and accompanied Moira to her mental health appointments. Moira has very low self esteem but has engaged well with WTP.

Moira receives £71 DLA per month. This is the extent of her benefits as her husband is in full time employment. Moira struggles financially as her husband does not part with his own money readily. Moira is very motivated to seek employment, and is under constant pressure from her husband to seek employment. Moira feels her record of convictions is a real barrier to seeking employment. WTP are supporting Moira with her desire to seek employment and have helped Moira compose her CV, plus liaised with Careers Wales.

Recently her daughter bought some stolen goods which were contained in her daughter's vehicle. At the same time Moira went to a local supermarket with her daughter and she was caught shoplifting. Moira was charged for both the shoplifting in the supermarket and the goods contained in the boot of the vehicle.

WTP accompanied Moira to court. The judge was very concerned at the amount of previous offences. He stated he was considering custody. After a short adjournment, and reading WTP's supporting statement, he asked the WTP support worker, how long the project would support Moira. It was explained the support continued until such time as Moira no longer requires it. After this the judge felt that WTP offer the same support if not more than probation. He gave Moira an 18 month conditional discharge, and rather than a fine, he said Moira should pay £60 costs, repayable at £5 per month.

## **Pen Picture Nancy.**

Nancy was referred to WTP by her child's Social Worker in September 08. She has previously been involved with Probation for driving offences, road rage and shop lifting. Given her difficulties with budgeting and that she has recently detoxed from heroin she is deemed to be at risk of offending as she has said that she feels there is a constant temptation to use again.

Although Nancy has a Tenancy Support Worker the social worker felt that Nancy would benefit from additional support in order to help her with her own health issues and those of her 18 year old son James who has a rare abnormality of the brain.

Nancy's WTP support worker attended a Child Protection Conference at the beginning of March where progress was noted and Nancy's daughter Jane aged 9 was moved off the Child Protection Register to Child in Need.

Social Services talked to Jane's school and the decision was made, with the agreement of both parents, that the case would be closed at the end of March 09.

Nancy had requested some support for her son James who she feels should be in receipt of DLA and should also be receiving some individual support of his own. Since working with Nancy I have now referred James's claim for DLA to the Welfare Rights unit who are able to provide more specialist advice given that James's has a medical issue which affects his ability to learn and socialise.

I have also written to James's Professor of Neurology to request that consideration be given to a specialist key worker for James in order to help him access educational opportunities.

Nancy has recently requested support to return to work so an appointment has been made for her to attend Careers Wales in May; she is also prepared to visit the Women's workshop to see if there are any courses that she feels will help her gain new skills.