



Partnership Pre-Release Support Pathway

HMP Kilmarnock

Contents

INTRODUCTION 2

AGENCIES AND SUPPORT INVOLVED IN PRE-RELEASE PLANNING 3

 HMP Kilmarnock Link Centre 3

 North Ayrshire Council Housing..... 3

 Ayr Housing Aid (East and South Ayrshire Residents) 4

 Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) 4

 Social Security Scotland 5

 Voluntary Throughcare Service – Upside..... 5

 Other Prison-Based Services and Supports 6

 NHS – GP Registration, Dental Registration, Addiction Services, Prescriptions, Mental Health Services 6

 Justice Social Work – Voluntary Throughcare 7

 Reconnect Scotland CIC..... 8

MINDS 8

 Bank Accounts 8

 Scottish Welfare Fund..... 9

 CRM Process..... 9

 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service 10

 Liberation Packs 10

 Onward Travel 10

TIMELINE..... 11

FURTHER INFORMATION 12

 Drop-In Support Available in The Community 12

 Links To Directories with Details of Additional Supports..... 12

INTRODUCTION

This pathway has been developed to outline the multi-agency process for pre-release support planning and liberation within HMP Kilmarnock. It applies to men being liberated from HMP Kilmarnock to an address in North, South or East Ayrshire.

The partners involved in the delivery of this pathway are:

- Ayr Housing Aid
- DWP
- East Ayrshire Council
- East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- MINDS
- National Voluntary Throughcare Service - Upside
- NHS
- North Ayrshire Council
- North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- Reconnect Scotland CIC
- Scottish Prison Service
- Social Security Scotland
- South Ayrshire Council
- South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

The aim of this pathway is to support improved outcomes for people returning to Ayrshire after a period of custody in HMP Kilmarnock through strengthened partnership working and clarity around the agencies and processes involved in pre-release planning.

The intended audience for this document is staff and volunteers working across partner agencies.

AGENCIES AND SUPPORT INVOLVED IN PRE-RELEASE PLANNING

HMP Kilmarnock Link Centre

The Link Centre within HMP Kilmarnock is staffed by dedicated SPS prison officers and hosts a number of agencies who work on-site with individuals prior to release. The contracted services who work within the Link Centre are Ayr Housing Aid, North Ayrshire Council Housing, Upside, DWP and Social Security Scotland.

A referral to the link centre can be requested from a SPS prison officer at any point during a sentence

North Ayrshire Council Housing

North Ayrshire Council provides a Housing Advice and Homeless Service to prisoners in HMP Kilmarnock who wish to return to the North Ayrshire area on liberation. The Housing Advice Officer (HAO) acts as the lead person for all individuals who access the service, including potentially homeless prisoners, NAC tenants, RSL tenants, homeowners, and private rented tenants.

The HAO will also intervene with rent arrears or anti-social behaviour prior to liberation to prevent evictions where possible and all legal tenancy matters are tackled whilst in prison. On most occasions this reduces the burden of housing intervention on liberation and can prevent evictions. The HAO will also liaise with other agencies and refer to the NAC internal Housing First Project for intensive prisoner support needs prior to liberation where appropriate.

The HAO will assist the individual with their plans for liberation, this includes assistance applying for a Community Care Grant, linking with the DWP for claim preparations and arrangements for temporary accommodation or returning to their tenancy.

Individuals who require homelessness assistance including temporary accommodation will be advised prior to liberation of any arrangements, and in most instances will be asked to attend the Housing Advice Team Office on the day of liberation for temporary accommodation to be offered. The reason for this is due to an ongoing demand for temporary accommodation therefore there is limited ability to pre-arrange an address.

During the time spent in temporary accommodation, Housing Support or Housing First staff work with the individual to resolve any support issues and links with relevant services. This support continues through to resettlement when housed, helping with

applications for community care grants and changing address with DWP etc. The HAO will continue to manage the homeless application through to housing outcome.

In instances where someone has their own tenancy, the HAO will complete a referral to North Ayrshire Council's Housing Support Team prior to discharge. The Housing Support Team Coordinator allocates an Officer who will arrange to visit the tenant to offer support once they have returned to their property.

Everyone returning to North Ayrshire will be invited to an appointment with the Housing Advice Officer 8 weeks prior to liberation

Ayr Housing Aid (East and South Ayrshire Residents)

Ayr Housing Aid deliver a Housing Advice Service within HMP Kilmarnock, working with people from date of entry up until date of release and linking in with other agencies and partnerships to ensure the best outcome for the person, with homelessness being prevented wherever possible. Housing Options receives weekly data on admissions over the previous week, scheduled liberations over the next 12 weeks and liberations over the preceding week enabling Housing Options to plan accordingly.

The Prison Housing Advice Service proactively contacts all South and East Ayrshire residents within HMP Kilmarnock three months prior to release to establish any housing/homeless information and advice needs. Homeless interviews (usually via telephone) if needed will be arranged with the Housing Options Teams around two months prior to release. The team will then meet with everyone 6 weeks prior to release to discuss support needs and referrals will be made, an application to the Scottish Welfare Fund is also made at this time.

Daily checks are completed to monitor prison intakes, and an appointment will be made as soon as possible after someone coming into custody. Appointments can be requested at any stage during custody until release.

Everyone returning to South or East Ayrshire will be contacted 12 weeks prior to liberation to establish housing needs. Homeless interviews, if required, will take place 8 weeks prior to liberation. Everyone will be invited to an appointment to discuss support needs 6 weeks prior to liberation

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) operate a service in HMP Kilmarnock through the link centre with a number of designated prison work coaches. In addition to

being part of the weekly CRM process, DWP receive a list of all upcoming planned liberations which allows for appointments to be offered in advance of release.

Following initial engagement whilst in custody, men are given a time slot to come into their local DWP office following liberation. DWP aim to have the prison work coach deliver the appointment with the person in the community to ensure consistency for the individual and increase chances of engagement. DWP also have safeguarding officers who will go and visit a person should they miss appointment.

*An appointment with DWP can be requested through the link centre at any point whilst in custody. Everyone will be invited to an appointment 6-8 weeks prior to liberation *

Social Security Scotland

Social Security Scotland provides a variety of benefits, including:

- **Disability support:** Adult Disability Payment, Child Disability Payment, and Pension Age Disability Payment
- **Family support:** Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant, and Best Start Foods
- **Carer support:** Carer Support Payment and Carer's Allowance Supplement
- **Funeral support:** Funeral Support Payment
- **Job support:** Job Start Payment
- **Heating support:** Child Winter Heating Payment and Winter Heating Payment
- **Young carer support:** Young Carer Grant

Application for any of the benefits administered by Social Security Scotland can be made online, by phone, through the post or in person. Face-to-face support is provided by appointment only and is available in the Link Centre every Thursday. Telephone appointments are also available. For any prisoner who would like to make a claim, the staff would take basic details and then arrange for a follow up appointment prior to liberation for the application to be made.

* An appointment in the Link Centre can be requested at any point whilst in custody *

Voluntary Throughcare Service – Upside

Support through Upside is available for females, males and YPs leaving custody from a short-term prison sentence of less than four years, or who have been remanded with no statutory involvement upon release.

Upside provides dedicated throughcare support to people as they transition from prison, back into the community. Community Workers will engage pre-release to identify and construct a plan to meet identified needs. Examples of the support areas are finances, access to housing, mental health, registration with GPs, substance use, etc.

Support plans respond and adjust to needs as these evolve and enable key support to be provided as situations change.

The community journey is for twelve months from point of release from prison.

Upside also offers a gate pick-up service to each person accessing support.

All eligible individuals will be approached up to twelve weeks prior to liberation to offer the service. Community Workers then engage with the person to establish the relationship and build rapport, assessment of needs and agree liberation support.

* All eligible individuals will be approached up to 12 weeks prior to liberation to offer Upside support *

Other Prison-Based Services and Supports

The following services and supports are all based within HMP Kilmarnock:

NHS – GP Registration, Dental Registration, Addiction Services, Prescriptions, Mental Health Services

GP registration – For men in HMP Kilmarnock returning to an Ayrshire address, the NHS will write to the individual 2-3 weeks prior to release to establish if they are already registered, if they need to change GP, or if they are not registered. The NHS will then complete and send a registration form and a clinical summary to the community provider.

Prescriptions - For planned liberations, patients are either provided with a short-term supply of medication on day of release, or with a prescription to access the medication whilst in the community (or a mix of these), with the exception of OST (Opioid Substitution Therapy). Patients in receipt of OST will be given an appointment to attend addiction services to receive a prescription.

Addiction services – Everyone will now be offered an appointment with NHS addiction services 7-10 days prior to release, including harm reduction advice and naloxone training. Any patients on OST will be referred to their local drug and alcohol teams or other organisations.

Mental health services – If the individual has a diagnosis which comes under Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) criteria, they will be referred to their local team. Prison healthcare have links with the CMHTs in Ayrshire and can link in with their referral/triage

meetings. If a patient is open to psychiatry, the clinical psychiatrist would complete an onward referral. If a patient is involved with low-level psychological intervention, they will be highlighted to the CMHT, and the prison healthcare team will consider if there are any third sector agencies within their community they could be linked with. If there are increased risks to the patient's welfare, prison healthcare can organise multidisciplinary meetings to include other professions, such as social work and housing.

*GP registration will be discussed 2-3 weeks prior to liberation. An appointment with NHS addiction services will be offered 7-10 days prior to liberation. *

Justice Social Work – Voluntary Throughcare

Throughcare support from JSW is provided on a voluntary basis for men on short term sentences, and on a statutory basis for men on long term sentences or with specific release conditions

Voluntary Throughcare is provided by the Justice Social Work team and can assist in supporting individuals who are being liberated from prison with areas such as, registering with a General Practitioner, housing and benefits. If required the person can also be referred to other agencies for specific assistance such as literacy, addiction and employability support. If the person also wishes to address some of the areas which led to their period in custody it may also be possible for Justice Services to undertake short pieces of intervention such as problem solving or emotional regulation.

East, North and South Ayrshire Justice Services are provided with details of people due to return to their local authority following release from prison custody. A letter/email is sent to each individual due to be released advising them of their entitlement to voluntary throughcare and some information on the types of support that is available (please note that if you are returning to South Ayrshire you will only be offered VTC if you agree to participate in the CRM process within the prison). This provides contact details for justice social work services, as well as (North Ayrshire) addiction services and third sector organisations. South Ayrshire JSW work closely with PING and the ADP to offer support and guidance on release from custody. JSW also attend the weekly Community Reintegration Meeting (CRM). Voluntary Throughcare letters are usually sent out between 4-6 weeks prior to release.

In South Ayrshire, the Justice Peer workers contact most individuals due for release, via email a prisoner, offering support on release and also provide contact details for Justice Social Work, offering voluntary throughcare from this service in addition to the support offered by the Peer Workers.

* Voluntary Throughcare support is available with Justice Social Work 4-6 weeks prior to liberation*

Reconnect Scotland CIC

Reconnect Scotland CIC offer tailored action plans for each person engaging, ensuring that issues relating to health, benefits, housing and addictions, are being addressed pre-release. The team offer a gate pick up service on the day of release, providing support to attend appointments and make any phone calls. The team also provide ongoing post release support, attending appointments, making phone calls as well as providing emotional support as and when required. RS have the contract for the Visitors Centre within HMP Kilmarnock and are able to provide support to the families of those in custody. The team aim to engage with people when they first enter into custody, providing support and building positive relationships throughout their sentence.

*Reconnect Scotland will routinely engage with eligible individuals when they first enter custody, and support can be requested at any point throughout the sentence *

MINDS

Mentoring Individuals for New Destinations and Support (MINDS) deliver two weekly sessions within HMP Kilmarnock, looking at a range of different issues including coping mechanisms, behavioural activation, setting boundaries, harm reduction etc. Sessions are delivered on a Monday and a Friday and are open to anyone serving a short-term sentence or on remand. Both sessions are available to book through the ATM (a waiting list may be in place), or through self-referral, staff referral, or family-referral. MINDS can offer one-to-one support to individuals prior to liberation if required and can provide access to a range of activities in the community including football, gym and a drop-in session (North Ayrshire based).

Access to the MINDS sessions can be requested through the ATM at any point during a short-term sentence or whilst on remand

Bank Accounts

The prison can apply for bank accounts for men whilst in custody, however banks reserve the right to refuse applications and will in some cases (e.g. where they are possibly worried about reputational damage), meaning some men are not able to have this set up prior to leaving. Men can access their bank accounts using systems inside the prison.

People refused an account whilst in custody can attend a bank in person after release and set one up (as bank won't ask if they've been in prison) - advice is given in liberation packs about available banks.

*An application for a bank account can be requested from a SPS prison officer *

Scottish Welfare Fund

Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) is a discretionary scheme administered by local authorities. The fund is split into Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants. Any grant awarded is based on an assessment of your circumstances. Applications need to be made to the local council the man is returning to. Grant applications will be discussed at the pre-release appointment with housing services, who will arrange for the application to be processed.

* Grant applications will be discussed at the pre-release appointment with housing services *

CRM Process

HMP Kilmarnock facilitate a weekly Community Reintegration Meeting (CRM) which allows a range of partners including DWP, Housing, Justice, NHS and other third sector agencies to work with the prison to map out a liberation plan. The meetings are led by the Head of Offender Outcomes within HMP Kilmarnock and look to discuss the support needs of people due to be liberated to Ayrshire in the next six weeks.

Men are invited to an appointment within the prison link centre on a Thursday approximately 6-8 weeks prior to liberation, where they will meet with the link centre prison officers and link centre partners to discuss their support needs. Following this, the support needs of the men will be discussed at the CRM on a Tuesday morning and partners will ensure all plans are put in place to link that individual with the support required. This allows everyone involved with supporting the individual to be up to date of their plans for transition from custody back into the community.

Everyone who is eligible, will be invited to participate in the CRM process 6-8 weeks prior to liberation. The first stage in the process will involve a meeting in the link centre to identify support needs

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

A Home Fire Safety Visit is a free service provided by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). Fire staff or local crew members visit your home to check for fire risks, give safety advice, and install free smoke alarms if you need them.

What Happens During a Visit:

- Risk Check: Staff look for everyday fire hazards in your rooms.
- Alarm Service: They test your current smoke alarms or fit new ones.
- Escape Plan: They help you make a clear plan to get out safely if a fire starts.
- Safety Tips: They share advice on cooking, bedtime routines, and electrical safety.

****Speak to Housing about organising a Home Fire Safety Visit when you have your pre-liberation appointment, either apply online at <https://hfsv.firescotland.gov.uk/> or call 0800 0731 999 when back in the community****

Liberation Packs

Everyone being liberated will be offered a liberation pack as they are leaving the prison gate and there is also the option to receive a sports-holdall type bag to take their belongings away if required. The liberation packs contain useful information and contact details about supports available when leaving prison.

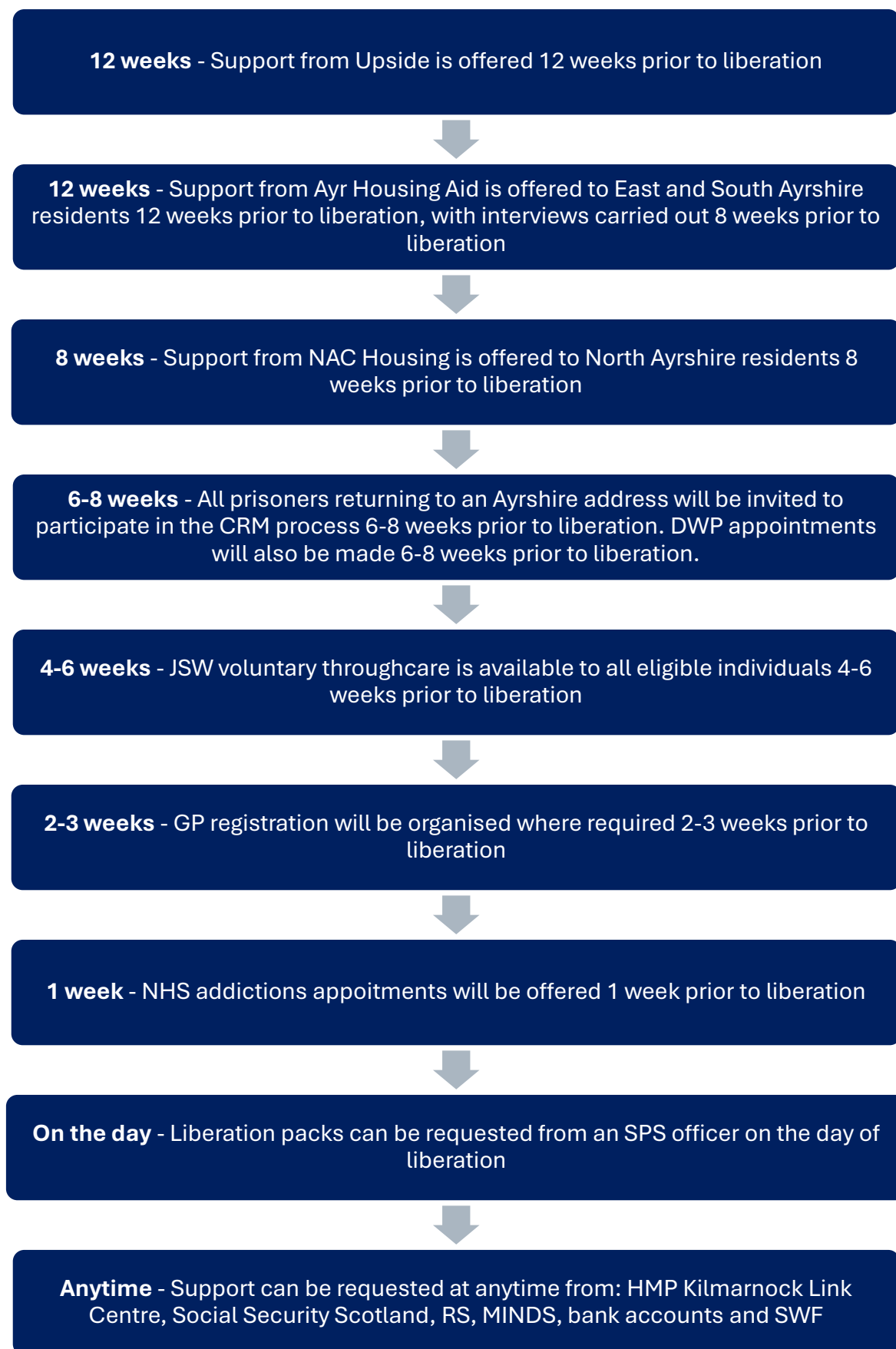
Liberation packs and holdalls can be requested from a SPS prison officer

Onward Travel

Anyone without a gate pick up arranged will be provided money to cover travel to wherever they are going. Travel-line maps and directions are also supplied in liberation packs. Upside and Reconnect Scotland CIC all offer a gate pick up service.

Gate-pickups can be requested from certain throughcare support services and travel money can be requested from a SPS prison officer

TIMELINE



FURTHER INFORMATION

Drop-In Support Available in The Community

- **South Ayrshire** - Compass, 7-9 James Street, Ayr, KA8 0DH – 01292 617600.
- **East Ayrshire** – Reconnect Community Hub at 4 St Marnock Place, Kilmarnock, KA1 1DU.
- **North Ayrshire** - The Recovery Hub (Unit 2, Rivergate Shopping Centre, Irvine -next to Freckleton's Cafe). Open every Wednesday from 10am - 3pm. Drop-in also available on Fridays from 10am - 2.30pm.

Links To Directories with Details of Additional Supports

Community Justice Directory (Local Directory):

- <https://communityjusticeayrshire.org.uk/community-justice-directory/>

Contains a list of services and organisations across Ayrshire who are working to support people impacted by the justice system. Information within the Directory is split into different sectors, e.g. Alcohol and Drug Treatment and Recovery Services, Family Support, Housing and Justice Services, etc.

Community Intervention and Support Directory (National Directory):

- <https://communityjustice.scot/community-justice/community-intervention-and-support-directory/>

Contains information about community justice support and court solutions available in each local authority across Scotland.