




**GRAND AVENUES  
GREGYNNOG  
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# The Concept

- A HMPPS led project, which is testing the concept that locality-based supervision can maximise the likelihood of successful, sustained rehabilitation, achieved through:
    - **Enhanced assessment of individual and community needs**
    - **Trialing innovative community interventions**
    - **Engaging local communities to reduce harm and re-offending**
  - Grand Avenues has a ten-year lifespan and these objectives:
    - **Demonstrate reduced harm and reoffending in adult males**
    - **Implement a sustainable approach**
    - **Develop project aims through engagement with local communities**
    - **Positively impact on the wider community, especially the families and dependents of offenders, providing positive intergenerational outcomes**
  - It aligns with various UK Government and Welsh Government policies and strategies
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# Initial Scoping

- Based in Caerau and Ely: community engagement
- Combined population of 26,000
- High levels of crime and deprivation (income, employment, health and education (Caerau and Ely), housing and community safety (Ely)
- Over 200 local projects and local services
- Offender profiling looked at 196 men living in the area
- The area is often regarded as problematic and troublesome, but there is a strong sense of community and pride:

*So that kind of reinforces for some people who are outside of that, but it's not anywhere near like that ... it's no different really to a lot of areas.*

*But there's still a lot of the same old families, people who know it, who are very proud to be there, like the area, and don't see it the way the rest of the world sees it with this reputation that comes with it.*

# Eligibility Criteria

- Males under the supervision of the Probation Service who live in the Caerau and Ely wards (determined by the post code of their place of residence)
- Females were not included because the Female Blueprint and Women's Pathfinder
- Male offenders were not eligible if they were:
  - **A registered sex offender (because of risk-related issues)**
  - **Receiving enhanced offender management, which includes Integrated, Offender Management (IOM), Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Levels 2 and 3, Wales Integrated Serious and Dangerous offender Management (WISDOM) and Supporting the Transition of Military Personnel**

# The Probation Service

- The team
  - **A senior probation officer**
  - **Two probation officers**
  - **Two probation service officers**
  - **A trainee probation officer**
- Proposal of a reduction in caseload – 20% then 10%
- Venues – a main base for two years
- No formal operating guidance

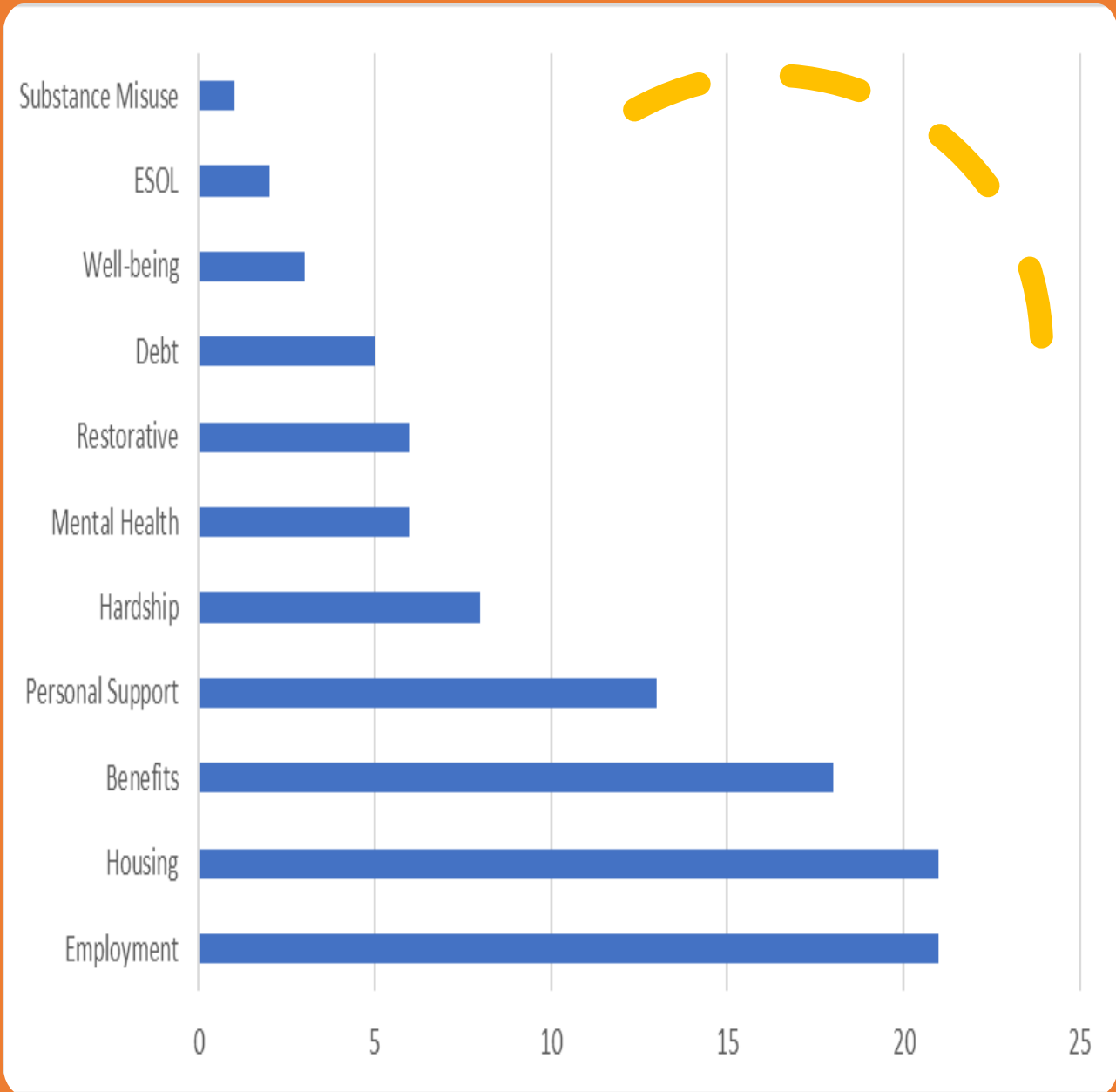
The Grand Avenues approach for two years

Grand Avenues took a community development rather than a solely risk management approach



# Snapshot of cases – support provided

64 cases examined  
X1 need = 36 people  
X2 needs = 20 people  
X3 needs = six people  
X4 needs = two people





# Financial assistance - one man's story

1. *That's how I committed my offences. Because I went to work, then I got laid off, then I went to work on the bins, for the County Council, that's when I slipped and did my back in. So, I went on the sick. They took me off the sick and said, "No, you can go back to work," but I should have appealed it.*
2. *Yeah, and I couldn't go back to work because I couldn't walk and then they just... So, that's how I ended up going back to being a criminal ....*
3. *[Support worker] sorted out my sick benefit for me .... Yeah, I told her about the difficulties. She's done all the forms and now I've been awarded my PIP and that. There's no reason for me to commit any offences..... I don't want to be out there. Being a criminal, you can get loads of money can't you, I suppose. And you don't care about money. But now, the rent's getting paid, and I've got enough money to last the month until I get paid again, so what's the point? Who wants to go to jail really isn't it?*





# Strengths

- Probation officers want to be in the community and to get to know the people they are supervising in their own locality and usual surroundings.
- The right environment in which to meet (warm and welcoming)

***I don't think you can reach people in a crappy environment***

- Men on probation like to be able to report locally and responded well to the different environment
- Being able to offer strengths-based holistic support and combining the probation role with the practical knowledge and emotional support provided by partner agencies.
- Having a strong team of committed professionals who have the same focus and a complimentary skill set.
- Building relationships in the community and being part of the community – being able to engage in local activities during and after their order.



## Some Considerations

- What is Grand Avenues and what is it trying to achieve? Has it got a clear enough identity?
- The direction of travel for Grand Avenues is not always apparent (a 10-year project). What is the plan, priorities and milestones?
- More of a need to focus down and not broaden out: do a few things well
- Consistent communication, who knows what and how are they involved in how Grand Avenues develops
- Local leadership – is it a project manager, should it be probation led, where should the governance lie?
- A stable venue for 2024/25 – the right environment – faith-based or not?



## Some considerations

- Can probation be enabled to practice differently and if so, what would that look like?
- What is the role of the community-based probation officer – a community connector or not?
- Having support services available has made a significant difference for some men – practically and emotionally – what should that look like?
  - A one stop shop (co-location)
  - Immediacy of access – how achieved?
  - Complimentary and/or co-located services
  - Support to access services based elsewhere
- What should support to the probation service look like?
- Emotional support (a skilled set of workers – unique or not?)
- Enrichment activities – with a well-being focus
- Involvement of people with lived experience – peer mentors or volunteers?



# Final Considerations

- Partnership working
  - The same ethos, but different cultures, approaches and agendas
  - Understanding the role of probation – risk management in particular
  - Communicating well (or not)
- Community engagement
  - Asset Based Community Development
  - Community development workers (parts one and two)
  - Community development or support workers or both?
  - Look at the needs of the men and build outwards
  - Will it work as well as having services co-located?
- Family focused work and intergenerational prevention
  - A realistic ambition?
  - Resources required?
  - Men, then family, then community?

# Feedback from men on probation

- **Proximity to home**
  - Living around the corner, in walking distance, able to call in
- **Warmth of the welcome**
  - Relaxed, informal, less intense, less stigmatising
- **Support (practical and emotional)**
  - Immediacy, helpfulness, non-judgemental, see things happening
  - Services in the same venue: men's group
  - Having people to talk to
  - Making others feel welcome and reassured
- **Aspiration and opportunity**
  - Helping people with lived experience to see that things can change – wanting others to know it can happen for them
  - Volunteering, mentoring, taking part in something positive
- **Identity**
  - Being a different person, wanting to change, working at change, experiencing change and progression in life
- **Belonging**
  - Feeling part of something and fitting in
  - Doing something for and being part of the community

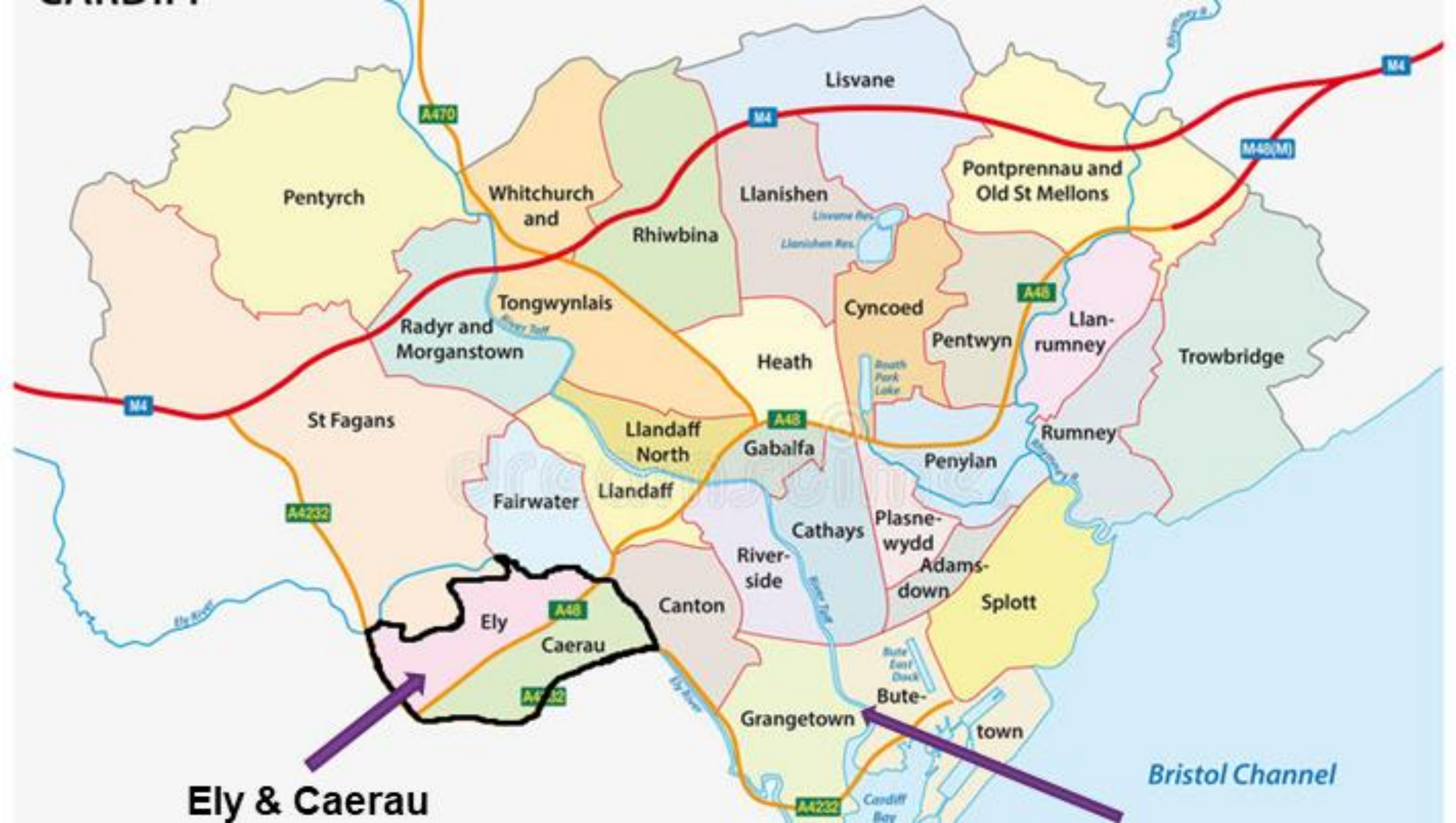
# What the men said

- It's really helped me this place
- Everyone is happy. Everyone is at peace
- Better than sending you up (to Westgate Street) with a bunch of criminals
- Why the hell are you offering tea?
- Having Grand Avenues in an area like Ely is amazing
- I am not going to stop coming even when my probation is over
- They just said keep trying, keep trying.... I was like a shell compared to what I am now ...- its brought me out ... and made me happier
- It was literally the best order I have ever had on Probation
- So my life was a mess .... you do something like that, you can't have a job like this ...that all changed for me ... I was told it could happen, I could have a job like that
- I want people to change their opinion of me – I used to do so much wrong, now I have the opportunity to do so much right
- It keeps me on the straight and narrow, where offending is far away
- I feel like part of the community, feel like I am on the map and I feel like have a purpose as well

Trapped by  
Circumstances

How Grand  
Avenues  
helped

- Offence and cuckooing
- Anti-social behaviour and threat to tenancy
- Lack of support and fear of being 'a grass'
  - *I didn't grow up with any of these people's dads or whatever, so I've got no-one... If I turn someone away, I don't know what the repercussions are going to be of that.... I had my windows smashed ... I don't want people coming in dealing drugs. I don't want to end up losing my property. If you phone the police, you're a grass, and grasses...*
- Theft of bike – means of getting to work
- Support with a housing transfer application – another part of town – length of process
- Assistance with removal costs and relocation



**Ely & Caerau**

*Bristol Channel*