

In order to make the requirement

At the pre-sentence stage:

... contact the Programme Manager at Willowdene on 01746 718658 to arrange joint offender interviews and commence the referral process

...contact Children's Services for those cases involving children to ensure appropriate child welfare is organised during the seven-week residential phase.



A delivery partnership between West Mercia Probation Trust, Willowdene and RITE Social Enterprises



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*To stimulate, promote and encourage a purposeful
offending/substance free lifestyle in a working society*

Women's Residential Skills Training Programme

A guide for probation and related professionals

Proposed Wording for Report Authors

Women's Residential Skills Training Programme

As an alternative to custody, this is a proposal for a 12 month Community Order with the following requirements:

Supervision Requirement of 12 months.

Residence Requirement (s206) of 7 weeks at Willowdene, Chorley, Shropshire, WV16 6PP.

Activity Requirement (s201) of up to 30 days to undertake the Care Farm Skills Training Specified Activity (whilst in residence at Willowdene Farm)

How does it work?

Female offenders from Redditch, Kidderminster, Worcester, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Hereford will be assessed in partnership by West Mercia Probation Trust and Willowdene. Women from other areas may also be considered. This assessment process will determine the suitability of women offenders for the requirement to reside at Willowdene **before** the proposal can be offered. This will enable correct assessment at the PSR stage.

Each suitable female offender will reside at Willowdene for seven weeks to engage in a therapeutic process, skills training, cognitive development and work-focused activity. This alternative to custody removes the women from their offending lifestyle, giving them focused time to turn their lives around. It is not reliant on housing benefit and, therefore, enables them to retain their homes without further impact on any other household member. This will enable the offender to return to a stable housing environment when reintegrated.

The requirement to reside will develop self and social responsibilities, and is designed to re-integrate each female offender back into society through a gradual process over the seven weeks.

Criteria for an Offender

Offenders suitable for this pilot:

- women over 21 years old who are at risk of a custodial sentence
- women who need structure, want to engage in purposeful activities, and improve their cognitive skills.
- where a community order is being proposed through either PSR or FDR in conjunction with Willowdene's assessment.
- women who will be non-dependent on drugs and/or alcohol

The following are excluded from the programme: serious violent offenders and sex offenders. Please note, children cannot reside at Willowdene.

Outcomes of the project?

Quantitative outcomes for offenders are as follows:

- Requirement to reside for seven weeks in self-contained flats
- 14 one-to-one therapeutic sessions
- A minimum of two nationally recognised qualifications (with an objective to achieve more).
- 10 hours of Advanced Thinking Skills
- Changes in attitude/thinking/perspectives, focusing on assertiveness, confidence-building and disclosure of abuse
- Independent living skills, including budgeting and household management
- Engagement in training opportunities.
- Engagement in work experience in a 'real-world' setting.
- Completion of the Recovery Star.
- A curriculum vitae produced, engagement in a job search and application process.
- Contributes towards reducing reoffending.

What else is on offer at the Project?

The project offers:

- A gender-specific alternative to custody, removing women from their offending lifestyle
- Training in up to eight subject areas with an opportunity to gain at least two nationally recognised qualifications and four centre-approved qualifications.
- Opportunity to find and gain employment.
- Focused cognitive development and one-to-one therapeutic input.
- Wrap around support and agency sign-posting.
- Involvement in seasonal activities including growing, harvesting and retailing produce, in addition to the other skill areas, which will include catering, household management, landscaping, carpentry and many more.