

# **HOLISTIC APPROACH TO REINTEGRATION**

## **FRIENDSHIP HOUSE**

**A COMMUNITY BASED RESIDENTIAL  
GOALS ORIENTATED REINTEGRATION  
PROGRAM FOR PRISONERS EXITING JAIL.**

**A SAMARITANS FOUNDATION PROGRAM**

**BY JACK FRANCIS  
Co Co-ordinator of Friendship House**

**REINTEGRATION PUZZLE CONFERENCE 2014  
Furama Riverside Hotel Singapore 30th July – 1st August  
2014.**



**Samaritans**

*Compassion Integrity Justice*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page No.</b>
<b><u>1.GENESIS</u></b> - - - - -	3
<b><u>2. FAMILY TREE</u></b> - - - - -	3
<b><u>3. WORK HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</u></b> - - - - -	3
<b><u>4. FH MODEL</u></b> - - - - -	3
<b><u>5. FH SELECTION CRITEA</u></b> - - - - -	5
<b><u>6. FRIENDSHIP HOUSE MANAGEMENT</u></b> - - - - -	5
<b><u>7. DOCUMENTATION</u></b> - - - - -	6
<b><u>8. TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS</u></b> - - - - -	7
<b><u>9. SUCCESS</u></b> - - - - -	7
<b><u>10. FACTORS AGAINST SUCCESS</u></b> - - - - -	9
<b><u>11. THE FUTURE</u></b> - - - - -	9
<b><u>APPENDIX A</u></b> Family Tree - - - - -	11
<b><u>APPENDIX B</u></b> Referral Form - - - - -	12
<b><u>APPENDIX C</u></b> Weekly Meeting Agenda - - - - -	13
<b><u>APPENDIX D</u></b> Goals List - - - - -	14
<b><u>APPENDIX E</u></b> Bar Chart - - - - -	15
<b><u>APPENDIX F</u></b> Preparation For Release- A New Beginning	16,17,18

# FRIENDSHIP HOUSE (FH)

## **1. GENESIS**

FH was born in 1995 when a number of Christian organisations working in prison welfare expressed a need for a residential program to help ex-prisoners through the critical first 4 weeks from exiting prison. However over the years all but one Christian organization has pulled out of the program and so for the past 15 years the FH program has been supported by the Samaritans Foundation, the welfare arm of the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle.

Newcastle is a large city (150000) on the banks of the Hunter River in the state of New South Wales (NSW), Australia. The city's has a large commercial port. Two prison's Cessnock (30k) and St. Helliers (120km) are the closest prison's to Newcastle.

The basic FH program model is community based, managed and run by volunteers which has not changed over the past 19 years, however over time the program has become more sophisticated and professional. The program does not receive any government assistance and is funded by the Samaritans Foundation of Newcastle.

## **2. FAMILY TREE**

FH sits under the Home for Good umbrella, Home for Good oversees all rehabilitation programs run by ther Samaritans Foundation. .Appendix A

## **3. WORK HEALTH & SAFETY**

FH takes safety very seriously, and as such it is the first item of business on our weekly meeting agenda. All our volunteers are entitled to believe that when they volunteer in the morning they will arrive home safely in the afternoon. To this end a number of procedures are in place to ensure volunteers do not place themselves in situations that could lead to injury.

These procedures include;

- Sign in/out for volunteers
- Meeting clients
- Entering FH
- Main office procedures with clients

## **4. FH MODEL**

The aim of the FH model is to provide through a goals orientated program support during the first critical four weeks of prisoners exiting jail.

The program has two volunteer co-ordinators to co-ordinate the program and currently eleven volunteers, one of which each week day takes the client to various places, in a car provided by the Samaritans Foundation, to assist him in the achievement of his goals

### **4.1 FH Model support:**

- a) Accommodation-** A prisoner on parole cannot be released from NSW jails unless they have accommodation approved by the parole service. FH provides accommodation for two clients at any one time, accommodation is a suburban house in an inner suburb of Newcastle.

**b) Setting Goals** – On arrival at FH on the first day of their release the new client discusses with the co-ordinator of FH what they want to achieve in their four week stay at FH, this then becomes their goals, they have ownership. These goals are then prioritised and emailed to each volunteer so that all volunteers are singing from the same song sheet. Each week the co-ordinator reviews with the client his goals, what has been achieved, any new goals and any change of priorities, these updated goals are then emailed to all volunteers, communication between volunteers and client and volunteers is essential to the achievement of client goals. See Appendix D for a typical goals list.

**c) Starter Pack** – On arrival at FH the client is issued with a starter pack consisting of a pair of sheet, pillow, pillow slip, 2 towels, toiletries, 2 x \$20 food vouchers, backpack, 2 food parcels, mobile phone starter pack, diary for appointments, display folder to hold the clients documentation.

**d) Volunteer and Car** – Each week day at 9am a volunteer in a Samaritans Foundation supplied car arrives at FH to drive and assist the client with his goals, this can be going to Parole, Methadone Clinic, Housing NSW, Doctor, Dentist, shopping, to the Samaritans Foundation OP-Shops for clothes which are given to the client free. The client is also taken to the many programs run by HFG for participation. The volunteer will ring FH the previous evening to the day he is on and discuss with the clients the activities for the next day. The volunteer enters into the FH log book what transpired that day. This a useful resource for the volunteer next day as he will be able to read what has transpired on previous days.

**e) Clothes** – When a client is released from jail he usually only has the clothes he was wearing when arrested. Most clients do not have money to buy new clothes and so are supplied clothes through the Samaritans OP-Shops free.

**f) Interagency Services** – We work very closely with other support agencies for ex-prisoners, especially if our client is also a client of those agencies. This ensures the client has the best outcome, we have a standing invitation for these agencies to attend our FH weekly meeting.

**g) Counsellor** – A counsellor Pro Bono, is available each week for our clients most find these sessions very useful.

**h) HFG Programmes** – (Slide) as you can see from the slide a compressive range of services and activities are available for our clients. It would be difficult to find in an NGO or in fact a government agency a one stop shop with such a complete range of activities for clients from Centrelink to fishing.

**i) State Debts** – are incurred through traffic and court fines. Most of our clients have state debts. NSW have a system that allows debt holders to pay off their debts through volunteer work at accredited volunteer agencies, at the rate of approximately \$30/hour. This is a great help to our clients.

**j) Mentors** – Some of our volunteers have also volunteered to be mentors to our clients when they leave FH, providing friendship and being available for a chat when needed, and to help through very difficult periods of re-integration.

**k) Setting Up New Accommodation** – When a client leaves FH he will need support to furnish his new accommodation, this can usually be accomplished by items donated to FH and to the Samaritans Foundation. FH has a container that was kindly donated to us to store such items, if we do not have an item an email around the 450 staff of Samaritans will usually produce a donated item. FH is able to help with moving items to their accommodation. The joy on a client's face when he suddenly realises this is all mine, is very satisfying. For most clients it is the first time they have a place of their own.

## **5. FH SELECTION CRITERIA**

Clients to FH are usually referred by Parole or Welfare officers. We also get referrals by Jail chaplains and sometimes self referrals by inmates. The procedure is to fill out a FH referral see appendix B. The referral is then reviewed by myself and the other co-ordinator, Paul, if we have a vacancy and we think the referral fits the FH model we proceed to the next stage, a telephone interview. The telephone interview is arranged with the jail parole/welfare officer. We have a standard prepared list of questions plus questions that may be particular to the client profile as determined from the referral he submitted. The telephone interview is generally conducted by Paul the co-ordinator and another FH volunteer.

The main question we ask is what has changed in your life that makes you want to stay out of jail this time. Entry into our program is limited by our accommodation, two at any one time, which equates to a maximum of 24 per year. To gain the maximum benefit from our limited resources we try to select clients that have a desire to change. Having said that we know that the desire to change in jail is sometimes different from the desire to change on the outside. In jail they are in a controlled environment without outside influences, once outside that control is lifted, they now become the control and that is not always easy. Also word gets around in the jail system, that if you want an address for parole, then apply to FH and say you want to change, we try to read between the lines in our interview.

Following the telephone interview a report is written by the two interviewers and then presented by Paul to our FH Management Committee meeting for approval or rejection.

We find through experience that inmates under 30 have not reached the age, in males about 35, in which they ask questions of themselves, why am I here on earth, why do I keep coming back to jail, what is life all about etc. The ability to ask introspectively of themselves these questions relates to an ability to change.

## **6. FRIENDSHIP HOUSE MANAGEMENT**

As stated earlier FH is a community based program managed and run by volunteers. The program does not receive government assistance. Its only source of income is donations from the community via the Samaritans foundation.

**6.1 Weekly Meeting** - A meeting is held each Friday morning at 9am, which is attended by the two co-ordinators, eleven volunteers, HFG co-ordinator and chaplain, drug and alcohol counsellor, This Way Home co-ordinator, State debt co-ordinator, external related interagency services personnel  
The weekly meeting is the glue that holds FH together and is one of the reasons for the success of FH. A typical agenda for the meeting is found in appendix C.

The meeting reviews the previous week's activities of our clients, the volunteer concerned reads out the activities carried out on his particular rostered on day if necessary he may elaborate on a particular activity/s or answer questions from members of the meeting on activities. This feedback ensures all members of the meeting are up to speed and fully conversant with the progress of our clients. Close monitoring allows FH to try to head off behaviour that would be detrimental to our clients. The close monitoring of our clients by feedback at the meeting is not manifested to the client by the volunteer, we want our clients to achieve their goals in as stress free manner as is possible. Coming out of jail and suddenly to be confronted with integrating back into the community, can be very stressful. Our volunteers are very aware of this and integrate achievement of their goals with a chat and a cuppa.

The presence of other interagency personnel at the meeting allows for a seamless transition between agencies and results in best outcomes for our clients that are also clients of these agencies.

## **6.2 Support in Jail**

FH recently produced a booklet entitled "Preparation For release – A new Beginning" see appendix F. The booklet is sent to our clients whilst in jail 3 months out from their release.

The purpose of the booklet is to:

Provide a bond between the client and FH

Provide details and encouragement for the client to obtain documentation he will need when he leaves jail, to enable him to hit the ground running and be able to concentrate on his reintegration goals. With only four weeks at FH time is limited.

To achieve all the clients goals in this time is difficult without documentation identified in the booklet. Documentation will include;

Birth certificate

Housing NSW T Number

Other identification to achieve 100 points

Centrelink crisis payment etc.

Encouragement Setting Goals

Identify their triggers and how to overcome them.

Eight motivational newsletters were also produced, one to be sent each week to our clients eight weeks out from their release. These newsletters draw on real life characters that show that ordinary people can do extraordinary things or when placed in situations that all seems lost, help and hope can change things around. They can be viewed at this link;

<http://www.samaritans.org.au/service/friendship-house/>

## **7. DOCUMENTATION**

FH documentation starts with a referral form which is filled in by the jail parole officer in conjunction with the prisoner. On receipt of the referral form it is given a number and key information entered into a data base. The referral form is then scanned into the computer and the paper copy destroyed.

The Data base was developed by FH in Microsoft Access. This then allows collation and dissemination of client data and statistics into reports or files for export. The database is particularly useful for reviewing previous clients when we get a repeat referral some years later.

To manage bookings and determine when vacancies are available we use an online Critical Path Program which is free (Ace Projects). The booking are displayed on a Gantt Chart, commonly called a Bar Chart. The chart is essential to identify when the next client is due to enter FH and to recognise vacancies when answering queries from Jails for prospective clients. See Appendix E

Other documentation includes;

Feedback forms for clients

Meeting minutes and agenda

List of programs showing dates/times when they are operating

List of clients each year complete with photo and phone numbers.

List of volunteers and details.

Telephone interview questions.

List of prospective clients showing dates FH Preparation For Release booklet and newsletters have been sent or are due to be sent to the client.

## **8. VOLUNTEERS and TRAINING**

New volunteers are invited to our Friday Meetings to get the feel of FH, we ask them to come to at least two to three meetings before deciding if they wish to volunteer for FH. If they wish to continue they will then go with one of our experienced volunteers for a period of at least four to six weeks or until they are comfortable going solo. At this point the new volunteers are given a half day induction course and a folder containing reference information to assist the volunteer.

Whilst we do not try to turn our volunteer's into Motivational Interviewers we nevertheless think it is useful to give them basic training in elements of MI, like, reflecting listening, change talk and modelling. The training is conducted in practical workshops, where the volunteer gets to practice these elements of MI. The volunteer's use of these elements is very softly softly and is used sparingly, as we recognise the many years of training and experience that goes in to make a professional practitioner and we cannot expect our volunteers to have that skill level.

The volunteer each day working with the client is one of the key factors in the success of FH. Most volunteers have been with the FH program over 5 years, this experience together with our training, gives FH a highly motivated and skilful set of volunteers able to provide friendly and knowledgeable assistance to our clients.

## **9. SUCCESS**

You have heard in previous papers and will hear in papers to be presented measures of success in their programs. Any program that case manages a client will have more success than a client that isn't case managed, irrespective of the amount

of case management. The fact that you have shown interest in a client and are willing to walk with him goes a long way in providing encouragement for a successful reintegration.

However we need some measure to gauge our program, or we will not examine what is good and what is not, what works and what doesn't.

We have a number of measures to gauge our programs success;

**9.1 Feedback Form** – we ask all our clients; was the program useful, what did you like about the program, what did you not like about the program, where and how can we improve the program.

**9.2 Connection** – If a client connects with our volunteer each day to work through his goals it is a good indication the client is motivated to reintegrate. However if the client is unavailable and uses excuses to connect we know from experience that reintegration will be a rocky road. Our weekly review with the client is not only to review their goals but also to reinforce and encourage their commitment to reintegration. For those clients that are not connecting we try to establish if they have a reason for not connecting and then work through those reasons and try to get them back on track, but for some that is not possible, they have their own agenda which unfortunately does not lead to reintegration.

**9.3 Joy of helping Others** - Our program is managed and run by volunteers, it is interesting the reaction this has on our clients, for the first week they are suspicious, you can almost hear them saying 'what do they want in return, nobody does anything for nothing, this is the culture in jail. But in time they realise this is for real, they are doing it for me without anything required in return. A germ is planted in their brain a powerful message is proclaimed by our volunteers, you can live your life doing good for others without requiring anything in return, it is done just for the joy of helping others.

**9.4 Recidivism** – At last year's conference a paper was presented on the difficulty of measuring recidivism and other methods that can be used, I agree with the thrust of the paper, especially the various methods that can be used I have mentioned two above.

The majority of our clients are repeat offenders who on release go back within a few months, certainly within a year. If for example we had ten clients who had an average return rate of 20 days, then their collective recidivism rate over one year would be 100%. However if through a program the return to prison rate was an average of 200 days, the recidivism over a year would still be 100% even though the return to prison days had increased by 180 days.

Recidivism percentages are a broad brush approach and need to be accompanied by a detailed analysis of return to prison days, type of prisoner (repeat or first), age, cultural background, drug use, type of crime, etc..

At FH we do not have the resources for such detailed analysis and take the easy way out of using return to prison over two years, one year and four weeks, knowing full that it is only a broad brush approach and only one of many factors to measure success.



Recidivism over four weeks the length of our program is 0%  
Recidivism over one year, whilst our program only runs for four weeks the aim of the program is to give tools to the client through our program and support he can tap into after the program to reintegrate into society, recidivism rate over one year approximately 20%, about half the NSW jail average.

## **10. FACTORS AGAINST SUCCESS**

Our clients are usually;

Middle aged

Multiple offenders

No family support as their family has given up on them

Suspicious of do gooders

Lacking confidence

No self worth etc. etc.

these are the fish that John West rejects. This profile makes successful reintegration that much more difficult. I hear some of you say, that description is normal for a reintegration client!

## **11. THE FUTURE**

The future of any organisation is only as good as the introspection that is applied to it. We regularly review the FH model and operations from both the client and volunteer side and ask these questions;

Are our safety standards adequate

Is our model outdated how can it be improved

Do our clients receive the re-integration they require

Is it a happy environment to volunteer

Is our training adequate etc.

It is from these reviews that changes and additions are integrated into the FH program. The most recent of which and one we are excited about is the 'Preparation For Release – A New Beginning' booklet and Newsletters.

We are proud of the FH model and believe it offers the right balance to re-integrate prisoners into society.

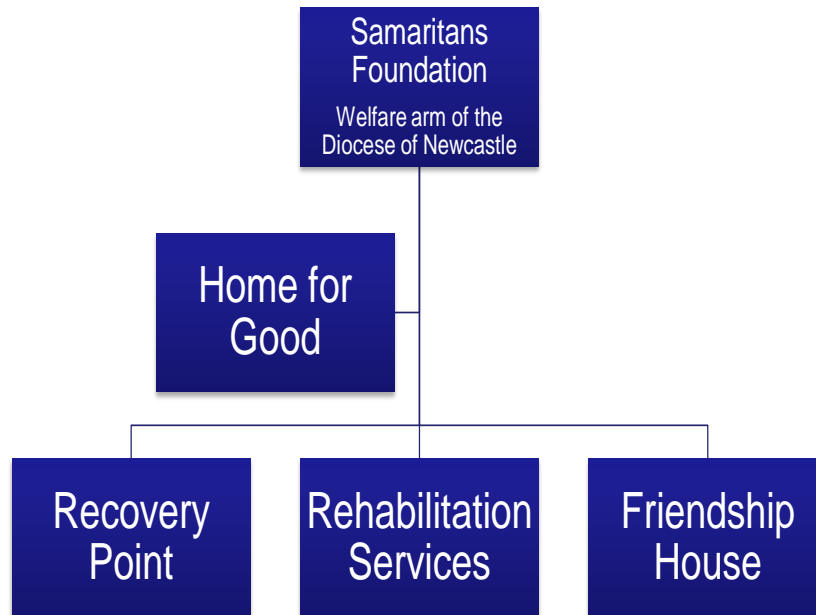
I will leave you with comments from a previous FH client. The comments were obtained by Crellyn, a lady working with ex-prisoners in the mental health field as part of further study by her. The comments were transcribed from a recording without edit. The comment below was from 'Gary'.

My mum walked out on me when I was seven and I was raised by an abusive alcoholic father who died when I was in gaol so I had no one to come out to. Um, I had no family, no support during gaol. When I was released, all I had was a phone number and a train station spot to get to... I had nowhere to go and I'd rung the Samaritans and they had given me a phone number and a train station to get to and that was like a twelve hour train trip to get to anyhow and here I'm thinking on the train, I don't even know where I'm going or what I'm doing.....

It's just their kindness and their generosity and their, their, they don't judge ya and so forth. Yeah, like this is the first time that I've been with the Samaritans, and I remember the first day when they picked me up and they brought me back here and they've got a shed with heaps of food in there and they said to me, "Go and get some food for yourself" and to me that was, I went and got two cans of baked beans

and a litre of milk and I walked out and he said, “Is that gonna do you for two weeks?” and I just couldn’t understand that I could just take this stuff, you know what I mean? It was for me, it was just, yeah it was just so daunting. Yeah I dunno, just their kindness, what they follow up with um, I don’t know what it is. I don’t know. I don’t know. It’s something deeper than just a hello and goodbye with em. There’s something there and it’s something that I like and it’s something they’re doing for us.

**Appendix A**



*Compassion Integrity Justice*

**APPENDIX B REFERRAL FORM**

Shown below is the front page of the Referral Form, the form can be downloaded by going to the web site below.

<http://www.samaritans.org.au/service/friendship-house/>



***Friendship House & Home for Good Project - Post Release Support Referral Form & Cover Sheet***

Friendship House Application  Home For Good Application

**Where is this Referral Coming From** .....

Client Name: .....

MIN: .....

Planned Release Date: .....

Referred by: .....

Position/Agency: .....

Contact Details Ph. .... Mob.....

Email: .....

The Samaritans will treat all personal and health information provided as private and confidential. The health information in this referral form is to be collected with the applicant's consent. The information will be used to determine the applicant's suitability for the Friendship House or Home For Good Project. The information will be held within the team of the Friendship House/Home For Good Advisory Committee, consisting of staff and volunteers. The application to Friendship House/Home For Good might be declined should the applicant decide not to provide their information.

**Please fax or email this form to Samaritans - Friendship House/Home For Good Committee – email: [brunker@samaritans.org.au](mailto:brunker@samaritans.org.au)**

**Fax (02) 4922 1560 Phone (02) 4922 1500 - 32 Brunner Road, Broadmeadow, NSW 2292**

**Please include Criminal History for Friendship House application**

**Friendship House/Home For Good, Use Only**

Received Date: ..... Telephone Interview Date: .....

FH/HFG Committee Decision Date: ..... Accept: ..... Reject: .....

Rejection Reason:.....

Program Start Date: ..... Program Finish Date:.....

Comments: .....

.....

.....

**APPENDIX C      WEEKLY MEETING AGENDA**

The weekly meeting agenda framework is shown below.

**AGENDA**

**Friendship House Committee Meeting Friday 23-5-2014**

**Prayer:**

**Apologies:**

**OH&S Issues:**

**Introduce to Meeting:**

**Minutes of Previous Meeting – As Printed**

**Business Arising:**

**Week in Review:**

**Buddy/Mentor:**

**Roster For week:**

**Liz- CRC –  
Crellyn- Justice Health**

**New Arrivals:**

**New Referral:**

**Committee Referral Decision:**

**Home for Good Update:** - Helen, Michael and Jen to report  
Other Matters

**General Business**  
A Good news Story

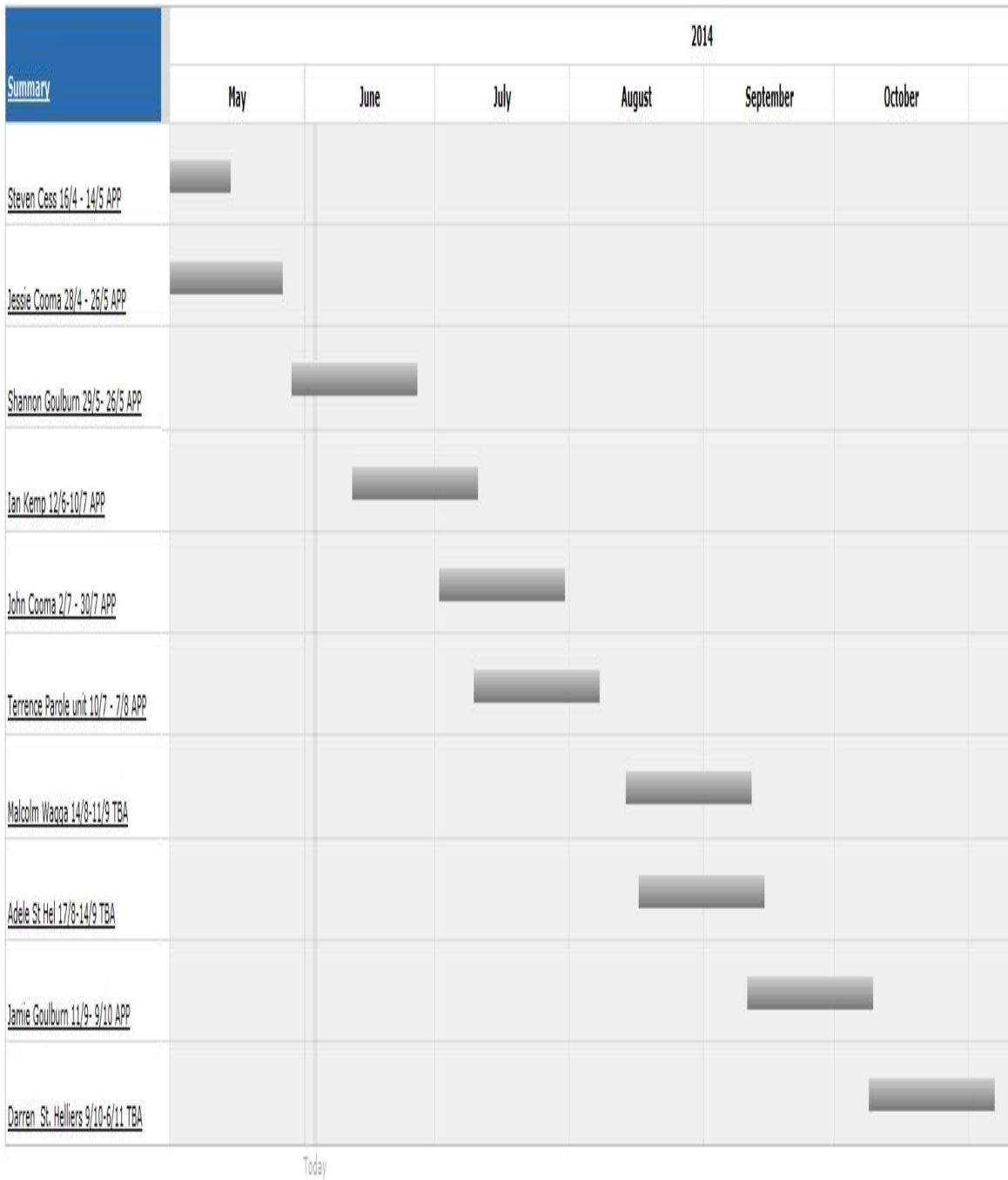
**APPENDIX D**

**GOAL LIST**

For the client to have ownership of his goals they must come from the client, however we know from experience that the client will need at least some of the goals on the list below, so we use the list to jog his memory if he has difficulty expressing his goals.

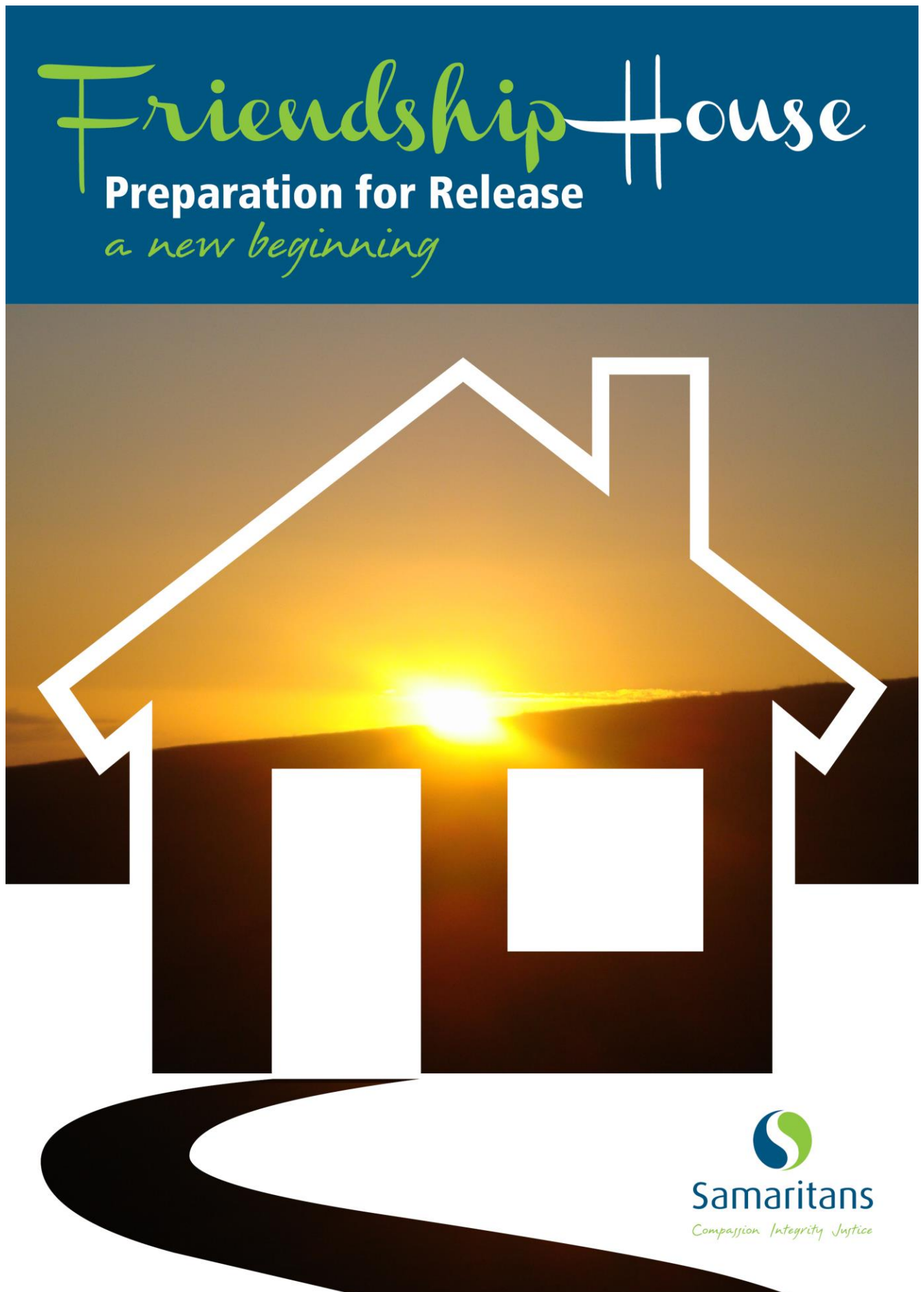
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Required Y or N</b>	<b>Comment</b>	Form updated 19/4/13
<b>CentreLink</b>			
Arrange debt repayments			
Income Statement			
Travel Concession			
<b>Birth Certificate</b>			
Obtain form, etc			
<b>Employment Provider</b>			
C/Link will allocate provider			
<b>Housing</b>			
Fill out with client Application Forms Housing NSW & Compass			
Go into Compass Housing with forms & attend interview with Client			
Obtain list of accomm from Compass and follow through with client			
Housing Debt			
<b>Bank Account</b>			
Check if client has bank A/C – Has Client 100 points			
<b>Clothing</b>			
Check if client wants clothing,			
<b>State Debt Recovery</b>			
See Bruce to organise			
<b>Medical</b>			
Arrange doctor visit			
Arrange dental visit			
Arrange mental health appointment			
<b>Miscellaneous</b>			
Counselling Andy			
Stress Level 1 _ 10			
Jen - Alcohol and Drug Counsellor			
Show client shop near FH			
Hamilton Library – Join up			
Smart or Responsible Choices Program			
Location Ocean baths, Beaumont st. Downie St			

**APPENDIX E FH BOOKINGS GANTT CHART – BAR CHART**



**APPENDIX F    PREPARATION FOR RELEASE – A NEW BEGINNING**

I have only shown three pages of the booklet, the full booklet is available on the following web link: <http://www.samaritans.org.au/service/friendship-house/>





Preparation For Release – A New Beginning , Contents Page

# Contents

**Help bef**

**Tips for Successful Parole ..... 10-11**

**Coping with Stress ..... 12**

**Release Schedule ..... 13**

**Documentation Points ..... 13**

**Countdown for Release—3 Months to Go ..... 14-16**

**Countdown for Release—2 Months to Go..... 17-18**

**Countdown for Release—1 Month to Go ..... 19**

**Countdown for Release—1 Week to Go ..... 20**

**On the Day ..... 21**

**Things to Do—Completed Check List ..... 22-23**

**Documentation for 100 Points ..... 24-25**

**My Important Telephone Numbers ..... 26**

**Notes ..... 27-28**

**Calendar ..... Last Page**

Preparation For Release – A New Beginning, A page from the booklet

# Countdown For Release

## Things To Do - 3 Months To Go

### Housing

To get housing through Housing NSW, Community Housing Providers or get a rental rebate in private rental you need a Housing NSW “T Number”. If you don’t already have a T number, organize this through your Welfare/Parole Officer to get Housing NSW application forms. Fill them out and give to your Welfare/Parole Officer to send to Housing NSW.

If you don’t know if you have a T number ask your Parole/Welfare Officer to ask Housing NSW if you have a T number.

If you have a T number, check to see if it is still active or if it has been deleted.

Where am I up to with my T Number. ....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

### Birth Certificate

Do you have a Birth Certificate? If not it is extremely important to get one before you leave Prison. Prisoner’s Aid will pay for a new Birth Certificate. Ask your Parole/Welfare Officer to help you. It’s extremely difficult to get back into society without a Birth Certificate.

I don’t have a Birth Certificate, so what have I done to get one is: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....