

AN INQUIRY INTO

CHILD PROTECTION IN JERSEY

ANDREW WILLIAMSON

JUNE 2008

Contents

	Page
1. Background	3
2. Procedure	4
3. Residential Care in Jersey today (2008)	6
4. Les Chenes	7
5. Greenfields Centre	8
6. La Preference Children's Home	11
7. Heathfields Children's Centre	11
8. Brig Y Don Pre School Group	11
9. Response to Advertisements	12
10. Issues identified from Interviews	13
10.1 Access to the Social Services Department outside office opening hours	13
10.2 CAMHS	13
10.3 Jersey Child Protection Service	14
10.4 Children's Executive	15
10.5 External Independent Scrutiny	17
10.6 Future direction	17
10.7 Children's Plan	19
10.8 A Children's Plan should include	19
10.9 Staffing	20
10.10 Induction process for staff	21
11. Conclusion	22
12. Recommendations	26
 Acknowledgements	 28
 Appendix 1 Advertisement	 29
Appendix 2 List of meetings/visits	30
Appendix 3 Documents/Reports received	31

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 I was appointed by the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers of the States of Jersey on the 23rd August 2007 to undertake an inquiry into issues relating to child protection in Jersey. Specifically the terms of reference were:
- 1.2 To investigate and report on:
1. the appropriateness of the policies, advice and procedures produced by the Jersey Child Protection Committee and the Health and Social Services, Education and Home Affairs Departments;
 2. the manner in which such policies, advice and procedures are followed by the departments;
 3. the standards, experience and qualifications of staff at all levels and within all relevant departments.
- 1.3 And to make recommendations as to any actions that are considered immediately necessary to ensure the highest standards of child care and protection and thereafter to inform any Committee of Inquiry which the States may subsequently constitute.
- 1.4 The inquiry was considered to be necessary following a number of serious allegations of malpractice particularly within the Children's Service which were made by a former Minister for Health & Social Services and other complainants.
- 1.5 Immediately after my appointment by the Council of Ministers I held a series of meetings with the Chief Executive of the States, Chief Executives of the departments for Health and Social Services, Home Affairs and Education, Sport and Culture as well as the Chief Officers of the Probation and Police Services to acquaint myself with the operational approach of each department and to seek their initial responses to the various complaints. I also sought information on current issues facing the departments – particularly relating to vulnerable children and young people and their families.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 An advertisement was published in the Jersey Evening Post for six nights over a three week period from the 19th November 2007 seeking responses from any person who had lived at identified children's homes or had been involved with the Children's Service, and who wanted to talk to me on a totally confidential basis to please contact me.

A copy of the advertisement is attached to this report at Appendix 1.

2.2 Given that much of the work of the Social Services Department is undertaken on the basis of confidentiality I considered this was the most appropriate method of seeking to establish contact with service users – both former and current users of the Service.

2.3 The final publication date of this advertisement coincided with the series of advertisements by the States of Jersey Police in respect of their inquiry into allegations of criminal behaviour against young people.

2.4 Having ascertained that this was the case I met with the Deputy Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police and the Head of Child Protection – States of Jersey Police and one of the two police representatives on the Jersey Child Protection Committee, to clarify the working arrangements for both enquiries and to ensure that my work did not in any way adversely affect the police inquiry. The original series of advertisements, outlining my involvement and providing my name and contact details, identified a closing date for referrals or complaints of the 14th December 2007.

2.5 However, with the significant publicity and media interest surrounding the police inquiry a number of referrals and requests for meetings continued to be received by me after that date, and with the agreement of the Council of Ministers the period to enable people to continue to make contact was extended until March 31st 2008.

2.6 During the period of the inquiry I have

- conducted 65 interviews with complainants;
- visited a number of children's establishments, some without prior notice;

- attended a range of meetings across States departments;
- met with a wide range of staff members employed by the States of Jersey.

- 2.7 During this period it was also decided that I should move my office and administrative support from the Chief Minister's Department to the Office of the States Greffe. Arrangements were put in hand to ensure that no communications or post were lost in the transitional period and I have received no indication that the move led to any breakdown in communication between either members of the public or current or former staff who wished to contact me.
- 2.8 I have conducted a number of personal interviews, 65 of which were as a direct result of people making contact with me voluntarily and in response to the series of press advertisements, and I also held meetings with either current or former members of the staff, Deputies, Senators and Ministers and those working for the voluntary sector in Jersey in relation to services for children.
- 2.9 As is usual in these circumstances and to ensure a thorough and meaningful discussion I gave an assurance of confidentiality to those people interviewed (within, of course, the parameters of the Law.)
- 2.10 At the conclusion of each interview and in order to be able to assess the likelihood of any current risks to children I specifically asked whether the individual concerned had any knowledge or concerns about the safety and well being of any child looked after by the States of Jersey as of that date.
- 2.11 I am pleased to be able to report that the unanimous response was "no", that they were not aware of any current risks to children in respect of the matter they had sought to discuss with me.
- 2.12 I should make it clear that had any allegations or concerns regarding the wellbeing of children been reported to me, I would have relayed the information to the police or the Children's Services immediately.

- 2.13 The majority of the concerns expressed to me were about the standards of services received over recent years and interviewees often sought to challenge some of the decisions taken by senior representatives of the Children's Service in the past.
- 2.14 Some felt aggrieved by what they perceived to be unfair, or judgemental, decisions concerning parental skills or the demonstration of a lack of clarity and professionalism in the decisions regarding child welfare or family life.
- 2.15 In December 2007 I requested that a former Director of Social Services for Kent County Council, Mr. Peter Smallridge C.B.E., could assist me in the inquiry as I felt that the benefits of having additional independent analysis of the Children's Service would be extremely advantageous. This was readily agreed. Mr. Smallridge is also currently chair of the Kent and Medway NHS Partnership Trust, Past President of the Association of Directors of Social Services and brings to the inquiry a wealth of experience. He has accompanied me on a number of visits – all of which are listed as Appendix 2 to this report, assisted with some interviews and he has also had sight of all copies of reports I have received– again these are listed in Appendix 3.

3 RESIDENTIAL CARE IN JERSEY TODAY (2008)

- 3.1 Peter Smallridge and I have undertaken, planned and unannounced visits to all of the residential children's establishments in Jersey over the last few months. These establishments are:
- Les Chenes (which subsequently became Greenfields Centre);
 - La Preference Children's Home;
 - Heathfields Children's Home and
 - Brig Y Don Pre School Group.
- 3.2 It is important to state at the outset that I have seen no evidence of the institutional or systematic abuse of children in any of these visits and that, so far as we know, the Service is safe for the children and young people in the States of Jersey Children's Homes today.

3.3 We acknowledge that present investigations into past practice on the Island may unearth a different picture but as we are not involved in those investigations it would not be appropriate for us to comment. Those matters are quite properly for the police to deal with.

We outline below our comments on each of the establishments.

3.4 From our visits and attendance at various meetings we both feel we can be confident that the managers and staff involved in the direct provision of residential services for children are competent in their work and keen to demonstrate high standards of care.

3.5 Essentially they, in conjunction and often increasingly in partnership with foster carers, provide a good service for children and young people who require care and support.

4. LES CHENES

4.1 Les Chenes is a large building which is currently not used for the provision of care for children. Prior to the opening of the new Greenfields Service Unit, Les Chenes was used as the secure facility for children and young people but was not designed for that purpose.

4.2 Staff told us that the previous secure unit was very unsatisfactory and, that far from meeting the needs of the resident children it allowed them to “run riot” and virtually run the establishment to the very real detriment to their care and to the increased risk of harm to themselves or to the staff.

4.3 We were told that there were too many children, some of whom were placed inappropriately, and staff felt lacking in confidence in terms of building design, staffing levels and training to deal with them. In short we were told it was “dangerous and needed to be changed.”

4.4 The Kathy Bull Report (December 2002) recommended the closure of Les Chenes and the decision was made for it to be closed. A new secure unit to replace it was commissioned and staff appointed to assist with the design. Visits were made across the UK to ensure that it would incorporate the latest and most effective techniques to provide a secure environment for children and young people.

- 4.5 It was also necessary to ensure an appropriate environment for daily living with recreational and educational facilities provided within the secure perimeter.
- 4.6 The move to the new “Greenfields” Centre was undertaken in a planned way and the staff told us that the extremely challenging and at times “out of control” behaviour exhibited not infrequently by the residents of the former home – Les Chenes – virtually disappeared since moving to Greenfields, which has been much easier to maintain and manage.
- 4.7 Les Chenes remains empty and proposals are listed later in this report regarding its possible future use.

5. GREENFIELDS CENTRE

- 5.1 This is a modern secure unit, is purposely designed and built to a high standard and, we believe is “fit for purpose” and appropriately staffed. Although staff tell us that access to training opportunities could be better, they are committed to the care regime that operates there and, to the children placed there.
- 5.2 On admission each child has his/her Care Plan agreed, reviews are carried out as appropriate depending on the length of stay of the resident. There appears to be a good working relationship between field social workers and their residential colleagues.
- 5.3 The major concerns expressed about the regime which operated there were about the “Grand Prix” system of managing children’s behaviour. This had been introduced during the unsettled period at Les Chenes, and established at Greenfields as the model for managing the behaviour of the residents. Staff were trained in the use of TCI (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention). In essence this was predicated on a behaviour modification model not unlike many we have seen operating in similar establishments in the UK. Offering rewards for acceptable behaviour and sanctions when it was not achieved, the “Grand Prix” symbolised achievement and failure and sought to make the system topical and understandable for the young people living with it.
- 5.4 In admission to a Secure Unit it is normal practice for the young person to be interviewed, informed of the rules for the general running of the unit, asked to remove their clothing, shower and change into the clothing provided by the unit.

- 5.5 At Greenfields, this routine takes place in a single room with private bathroom and the clothing given to the young person is in our judgement quite appropriate. There is an additional factor that has to be included in this process which is particularly relevant to a community such as Jersey and that is to ascertain whether the young person knows any of the other resident young people or members of staff within the unit. It does seem relevant, in our judgement, that issues of friendship or enmity that may exist between residents of the unit prior to their admission does need to be clarified and providing there is a constant and reassuring member of staff available to the young person during this process this is a necessary part of the admission procedure. This requires a short period of time when the young person will be kept away from the other residents but providing there is a constant and reassuring member of staff present and instantly available to the young person if not actually present in the room this is a necessary part of the admission process
- 5.6 The current model of care at Greenfields is based on “Therapeutic Crisis Intervention” (TCI), which was designed at Cornell University in the USA to address the needs and nature of the children and young people resident there.
- 5.7 We have seen TCI operate in a number of Local Authority Secure Children’s Homes and in Secure Training Centres in the UK, and we know that it is a model well liked and understood by staff and effective with children and young people.
- 5.8 Staff that we interviewed at Greenfields confirmed our assessment, although like their colleagues in England and Wales they are less confident about the capacity of the restraint mode inherent in TCI especially with larger and stronger teenagers.
- 5.9 Unpalatable as it may be to discuss the “restraint” of young people in care it is occasionally necessary to prevent harm to the young person themselves, to other young people or to staff.
- 5.10 The issue of “single separation” (to give the technical term used for what in Jersey has been described as “isolation”) has been, and continues to be, a big issue in the care for children and young people in secure care.
- 5.11 However, to use single separation/isolation, the process whereby children are forcibly removed from association with others and confined to a room on their own as a

punishment for misbehaviour, is clearly inappropriate and should never be sanctioned by any care regime.

- 5.12 A number of people who responded to my advertisement in the Jersey Evening Post wanted to talk about some of their experiences whilst living in Children's Homes in Jersey. At the conclusion of these discussions, and with their full knowledge and agreement, I arranged for them to make contact with the Police Inquiry, as it was agreed from the outset of my inquiry that it would be more appropriate for the police to pursue such complaints.
- 5.13 I was also particularly pleased that the Howard League for Penal Reform accepted an invitation to visit Jersey and see at first hand the new Greenfields Unit as well as the Young Offenders Wing at La Moye Prison. Their visit confirmed our understanding that the Grand Prix system had ceased to be in operation at Greenfields.
- 5.14 There are however occasions when severely disturbed behaviour is best dealt with by removing the child/young person from the company of others so as to not harm others and, to allow a "cooling off" period for the young person concerned.
- 5.15 Provided that regular supervision is in place and, if there is concern about the possibility of self harm more observation is established, the process itself need not be damaging to the child/young person.
- 5.16 It has not been possible to know with any certainty whether or not this process, used as described above, in all secure centres in the UK as necessary, was overused or abused in the regime at Les Chenes in the past. There are at least two versions of what happened there and the only comment we can make on the subject is that, if a prima facie case exists or emerges that the system and, therefore children, were abused, action should be taken against those responsible.
- 5.17 One of the main issues to be addressed since Greenfields has opened is its future use in terms of occupancy. On the number of occasions I have visited the home, there have been very few residents. Whilst it is commendable that the States of Jersey has this provision to ensure that young people needing such accommodation are able to remain on the Island,

(to facilitate parental, family contact etc), it is imperative that consideration is given to develop the full potential of the facility.

6. LA PREFERENCE CHILDREN'S HOME

- 6.1 Unannounced visits were made to all establishments and La Preference was no exception.
- 6.2 In general, managers and staff seemed committed to the care of the young people present and those young people we met, who were encouraged to talk to us by the staff appeared well cared for and largely content. The care regime was therapeutic, well understood by management and staff and systematically carried out.
- 6.3 All children had up to date plans and participated in their production and review.
- 6.4 The manager was keen to develop services for young people in partnership with other States agencies in order to make available a greater range of educational and career opportunities, especially for those leaving care. He described his work with his management team with concern and enthusiasm.
- 6.5 In summary we felt this establishment was in good hands and had a clear sense of purpose owned by the staff and the children alike.

7. HEATHFIELDS CHILDREN'S CENTRE

- 7.1 Two visits have been made to Heathfield, both unannounced, and on both occasions the home seemed to be running well and in a calm professional manner. I was given free access to talk to the resident young people and from my inspection records and Care Plans were up to date.

8. BRIG Y DON PRE SCHOOL GROUP

- 8.1 Similarly, I made an unannounced visit and was very impressed both by my reception and the open response to my questions and to the discussion with all members of staff present and of current issues facing the Children's Service. I was encouraged to talk to some of the children and young people and was particularly pleased to hear of a support package

being offered to a former resident of the home who lives nearby. The staff were very encouraged by a recent review day looking at Children's Services for the Island. They are currently involved in discussions regarding the future role of Brig Y Don, which is owned by a Charitable Foundation. Together with the development of the Fostering Service on the Island, the purpose and function of the residential homes are currently being reviewed and the staff at Brig Y Don confirmed during my visit that they are keen to participate in the provision of services for children and young people.

9. RESPONSE TO ADVERTISEMENTS

9.1 Of the 65 responses to the series of advertisements, a significant percentage were from current or former users of the Children's Service and they were critical of the service they had received. Given the personal nature of the work with children and families, there is often disagreement over what is in the best interests of a child, and therefore an aggrieved parent or relative. Nevertheless, it is imperative that all complaints are vigorously investigated to ensure that poor practice or lack of appropriate provision is identified. In a significant proportion of these complaints, the main area of concern was to do with a perceived lack of effective joint working between schools, Youth Action Team, CAMHS or voluntary agencies, and the Children's Service on the Island. In following up these individual complaints, I also detected this underlying issue and apparent lack of cohesion. To illustrate this, there is good evidence of an attempt to deliver a "seamless" service at one of the secondary schools - Le Rocquier School. This does not appear to have been developed at the other schools. It was difficult to understand why this has not been developed as a more universal approach, and I would consider that, given the geography of the Island, a common system for access to the specialist services provided by the Children's Service for potentially vulnerable children of school age and their families could be developed.

9.2 I have read the report "The Future of Children's Residential Care" by the Social Services Management Team, and support the recommendations. The success of the programme to recruit more foster carers and adoptive parents has resulted in a significant reduction in bed occupancy at Heathfield and La Preference. This does present an opportunity to redesign the children's residential provision within existing budgets.

9.3 Of the 65 interviews, there were four allegations of abuse while in the care of the Children's Service.

9.4 These related to periods of time spent at Les Chenes, or in the care of foster parents in the 1990's. Given the police inquiry into allegations of abuse in residential care, I advised the complainants to make contact with the police and provided contact details. This procedure was agreed with the Deputy Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police. I subsequently confirmed that the police had been contacted and follow up interviews arrangements.

10. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM INTERVIEWS

10.1 Access to the Social Services Department outside office opening hours

10.1.1 This was raised by a number of people and agencies who had reason to make contact with the Department either in the evenings or at weekends. The current arrangements require contact to be made via the States of Jersey Police force. When such assistance is needed in an emergency situation, it is often for issues of a personal and complex matter and I have been told of reluctance to divulge confidential information to a third party agency. Given that the Children's Service employs staff on a 24 hour, 7 day a week basis, e.g. at Greenfields I would recommend that serious consideration be given by the department to relocate the service and ensure an effective on call rota for senior managers to support the on call system.

10.1.2 There have also been access issues during periods of staff absence, when posts are vacant and although this is not such an issue when there is a full complement of field work staff, changes as suggested would in my view help improve the public perception of the service.

10.2 CAMHS

10.2.1 I have had a number of meetings with the Consultant Child Psychiatrist and the Clinical Psychologist (CAMHS) and other staff of this service. They are situated in a separate building in St. Helier which provides good facilities for working with children and families. Generally the service links well with other agencies and is keen to develop a flexible approach to meeting demand. Links with schools, the Youth Service and the Youth Action Team are crucial and proposals for a more integrated service in all

secondary schools, with close links to primary schools, will assist in this process. Discussions are ongoing at the present time with senior managers of the relevant agencies to develop a preventative service which will play a significant part in the development of the fostering service and enable children to remain at home with their family and receive the necessary support.

10.3 Jersey Child Protection Service

- 10.3.1 The Jersey Child Protection Service has recently been subjected to much criticism as expressed in the public media by a former Minister for Health and Social Services. Part of the series of events resulting in my appointment to this inquiry was to do with the Chairmanship and leadership of the Jersey Child Protection Committee (JCPC). The former Minister for Health and Social Services, as one of his last acts as Minister before leaving the post, dismissed the former Chair of the JCPC – a voluntary, unpaid post, because of the alleged conspiracy in relation to the non disclosure of serious allegations of abuse by a formerly employed member of staff in a children’s home. There were further allegations of mismanagement of a serious untoward incident leading to a review of practice by all the agencies involved.
- 10.3.2 Professor June Thoburn, from the University of East Anglia was asked to assume the role of chairman of the JCPC for one year and Professor Thoburn has undertaken this role since 1st January 2008.
- 10.3.3 She immediately launched a thorough review of the work of the JCPC and all the reporting and monitoring mechanisms and I have worked closely with her to ensure she is kept fully informed of the progress of my inquiry. Professor Thoburn has similarly kept me fully informed of her developing role and the changes she is introducing into the role and processes of the Child Protection Committee.
- 10.3.4 Essential to this review is the need for distinction to be made between the strategic and monitoring role of the JCPC with respect to multi agency aspects of child protection and, the day to day work of the Children’s Service staff in supporting families and protecting children from maltreatment. These developments should make it more likely that any inadequacies in the child protection services will come to light and be appropriately addressed in timely fashion.

10.3.5 Given Professor Thoburn's extensive knowledge of Children's services and her significant standing in the Child Protection Service in the United Kingdom, I am very confident in stating that the service will be safe, effective and monitored to the highest standards.

10.4 Children's Executive

10.4.1 This group was established in 2003 as one of the recommendations of the Bull Report. Membership of the Executive comprises senior representatives from the following Departments:

Education, Sport and Culture	Principal Youth Officer Principal Educational Psychologist Manager of The Bridge
Health	Consultant Child Psychiatrist Consultant Paediatrician
Children's Services	Directorate Manager Social Services Service Manager-Children's Service
Social Services	Co-ordinator, Children's Executive
Police	Police Inspector
Probation	Assistant Chief Probation Officer
Prison	Prison Governor

10.4.2 The Executive is accountable to the Ministers of the Home Affairs (HA), Health and Social Services (HSS) and Education, Sport and Culture (ESC) departments. It meets on a monthly basis and is currently chaired by Co-ordinator of the Children's Executive.

10.4.3 I have met with officers who attend the Executive meetings, read the minutes of previous meetings and attended one of their meetings to observe at first hand the work of this group.

- 10.4.4 I have noted that there is a degree of confusion about its purpose and effectiveness given the generally agreed lack of clarity about its overall accountability.
- 10.4.5 The original proposal, as outlined in the Bull Report was to develop the concept of “corporate parental responsibility”. That in my opinion is a laudable objective. But in my judgement this does not seem to have been achieved. The Children’s Executive appears to operate within the Children’s Service of the Health and Social Services Department and has created an additional tier of management without a clear line of accountability or delegation to ensure a corporate approach to the care of looked after children and since it includes some families support services for children who may be in need of protection whilst living with their families.
- 10.4.6 These comments should not be interpreted as wholly critical or negative as there have been some positive developments from the Executive. For example, the club that meets at the Greenfield site for young people in the Alternative Curriculum is an innovative multi-agency approach which demonstrates a clear commitment to help these young people develop and return to school at an appropriate time.
- 10.4.7 My main concerns about the Children’s Executive concern the issue of clear lines of accountability for services for children within the States Assembly. The appointment of a Minister or Commissioner for Children and Young People would go some way to improving the current arrangements and clarify the issue of accountability. I would further recommend that the Children’s Executive be replaced by a Children’s Services Executive Committee at Chief Officer/Deputy level to be responsible for developing and delivering a Children’s Services Plan for all vulnerable children and their families.
- 10.4.8 The decision as to whether the States of Jersey should appoint a Minister or Commissioner for Children is complex and in my judgement finely balanced. The role of Minister for Children could create some confusion in relation to responsibilities of other significant ministries - Education, Sports and Culture, and Home Affairs - but the benefits of having a single, senior appointment would give a very clear statement that the States of Jersey is determined to provide a high quality service for all children on the Island with clear lines of accountability. Whether the accountability should be for all children or for all vulnerable children who may be in need of additional services should be part of this discussion.

10.5 External Independent Scrutiny

- 10.5.1 One aspect of working in the public sector in a community that has a distinct geographical definition, which particularly applies to Health and Social Care, is the greater need, in my judgement, for external scrutiny of Services. Managing these services is complex and challenging and for obvious reasons securing appropriate external scrutiny in Jersey is more difficult but very necessary. A good illustration of this is the need for transparency of independence in the Reviewing post for Looked After Children. This is an essential post and the current arrangements, whilst being independent from the Children's Service and making best use of available resources, in the opinion of many who either receive the service or work in it, are not judged to be sufficiently independent. I recommend that consideration be given to employing an Agency or an individual to undertake the functions of the Independent Reviewing Officer who is not resident on the Island. There are currently 77 children and young people requiring this service and this degree of external overview would provide a level of security for the Chief Executive that services are provided at a satisfactory level and are compliant with all legal requirements.
- 10.5.2 Further thought should also be given to engaging an organisation to carry out annual or bi annual inspections of the work of the Social Services department to provide independent verification that the required standards are being achieved.

10.6 Future direction

- 10.6.1 The States of Jersey Children's Services have been subjected to a number of extensive reviews and as I write this report, there is the highly publicised, on going Police Inquiry into alleged child abuse at Haut de la Garenne, a former Children's Home in the Island.
- 10.6.2 Inevitably such a long period of external review can lead to degrees of uncertainty and lack of decision making, and if this has been the case, it is now imperative that a clear, focussed strategic direction for the Children's Service on the Island is established.
- 10.6.3 There are a number of areas of good practice which provide the necessary foundation on which to build the future services. The recent development of the Fostering Service must be acknowledged not only because of the initial success of the project but also because as it continues to develop it will provide an opportunity to redesign the provision of

residential care for children and young people on the Island. This in turn will allow further discussion and development of the Department's approach to services for vulnerable children across the age range and their families including Family Centres such as the La Chasse Centre, The Bridge and the Pathways project, managed by the NSPCC. These are developments that can be taken further and such development proposals might attract other voluntary organisations to come into partnership with the Department to improve the range of services available to children, young people and families.

- 10.6.4 Similarly the replacement of Les Chenes with the new building at Greenfields is a significant improvement in the provision of secure care for young people. The design of the building, which should be acknowledged as being of a very high standard will allow for a review of the use of the building, its links with La Moye YOI provision, and the opportunity to develop accommodation for all young offenders. Given the location of the Youth Offender Wing at La Moye Prison and the levels of occupation of the Greenfields accommodation there is an opportunity to use Greenfields to provide accommodation for all offenders under the age of 16 years. Given that on occasions Greenfields will also be providing care for a young person who has not committed a crime or placed on remand but requires specialist accommodation away from home or family, there are arguments against extending the use of the building in this way but we believe that given the design of the accommodation at Greenfields and the level of staff support, the remit for this building should be extended to provide necessary services for all those under the age of 16 years.
- 10.6.5 For those young people between the ages of 16 – 18 years, the arguments for and against transfer from La Moye to Greenfields, are more complex, and on balance we feel that such decisions could be taken on an individual basis, depending on circumstances at the time, occupancy levels, group dynamics of the resident population of the home, staffing levels etc and of course the needs of the individual. It might also be appropriate to consider the provision of separate accommodation, within the building, for young people with specific difficulties who are unable to live at home and who need supervision and support.
- 10.6.6 Television links could also be established with the Courts to reduce the need for transporting young people to Court for formal Hearings including remand. The Greenfields resource required significant expenditure and provides an opportunity for the Island to further develop the range of specialist accommodation with a high level of staff support in an efficient cost effective manner.

10.6.7 The Howard League for Penal Reform accepted an invitation to visit Jersey in May 2008 to look at the provision of services for young people in remand or in custody. I welcomed the invitation to this organisation to provide an independent expert report into this very serious and complex part of the penal system. They are expected to publish their findings in July 2008.

10.6.8 There has been much debate in the States Assembly about the appropriate age for residency at La Moye and Greenfields and the Howard League report will make recommendations in respect of this issue. There are, of course, arguments for and against any change to the present system but given the provision of the new secure unit at Greenfields and the possibilities being developed in the Foster Care Service (for example remand or bail fostering in appropriate circumstances) I do feel further consideration should be given to developing a more flexible approach to the use of the whole site.

10.7 Children's Plan

10.7.1 The Children's Service is currently implementing the common assessment framework for planning and assessing the needs of vulnerable and their families who may be in need of a specialist service. I would recommend the States of Jersey consider a biannual requirement for a Children's Plan to be published and the recommendations adopted by all relevant agencies. This would also give the Minister for Children a clear strategy for the development of services and a yardstick by which to assess performance and delivery. The Plan for children and young people would incorporate the policies for the following:

10.8 A Children's Plan should include:

- Early years;
- Playschemes;
- Daycare registration;
- Child health strategy;
- Child and adolescent mental health strategy;
- Children who are vulnerable following the divorce or separation of their parents;
- Taking account of children's needs in a housing strategy – especially in relation to the location of schools;
- An Island wide approach to the management of bullying;

- Youth Action Strategy including restorative justice;
- Increasing opportunities for Educational success;
- Skill development;
- Literacy, numeracy and the review of the primary curriculum;
- Connected youth strategy;
- Youth alcohol strategy;
- Secondary education;
- Restorative justice;
- School at the heart of the community;
- Arrangements to identify and intervene early for children who need additional help;
- Special Needs;
- Parenting Strategy;
- Inclusion;
- Alternative educational provision;
- Detached youth work.

And would lay the foundation for the longer term planning to structure services to deliver the desired outcomes and develop a model for workforce development.

10.9 Staffing

10.9.1 I have conducted interviews with members of staff, visited offices and Children's homes on a number of occasions and discussed relevant issues concerning the Children's Services with many other agencies, both statutory and voluntary on the Island.

10.9.2 The majority of the staff of the Children's Service are appropriately qualified and although there are recruitment difficulties from time to time, there is a positive approach to recruitment and forward planning in an effort to ensure continuity of service.

10.9.3 With regard to staffing levels to meet service demand I am not aware that this is an issue when all the posts are occupied and active. Inevitably issues of cover, absenteeism do arise from time to time when posts fall vacant unexpectedly as when illness or extended periods of leave occur.

- 10.9.4 One of the most significant conclusions from my series of interviews with members of staff is that there is a general feeling of lack of support or awareness of the difficult and complex issues staff face when working with very vulnerable children and their parents and carers. There was a general reluctance to be identified as expressing these concerns but on a number of occasions members of staff have said they would not expect to be supported in taking difficult decisions and stated “you are on your own”. Whether this is fact or illusion, this issue must be addressed and systems established for staff to be able to voice concerns without fearing instant rebuttal or challenges of malpractice.
- 10.9.5 This is particularly so when staff are dealing with complex access/residence issues following marital separation and when both parents are challenging the decisions taken by the social care staff. There is a view by some of those involved that making a complaint or seeking further discussion is responded to in a defensive manner which does not allow further debate. This concern has also been expressed to me by Voluntary Agency staff and it appears to me that the Children’s Service is sometimes seen as defensive and resistant to challenge. These criticisms will not come as a surprise to the Social Services Managers as they have been aware of these issues for some time and in fact in 2007 presented a paper proposing an Advisory Service be established based on the CAFCASS service in the U.K. The proposals would draw from existing service within the Children’s and Probation Services with some additional funding requirement for management and administrative resources but the workload demands for such a team should keep the additional funding to a minimum. I feel this proposal is worth developing as it will provide an additional level of scrutiny to a part of the Children’s Service that is often criticised and under pressure from external agencies. Any such developments will need to take into account the work of the Independent Chair of the Children Protection Conferences and of the Independent Reviewing Officer to enhance the quality of the service without unnecessary duplication.

10.10 Induction process for staff

10.10.1 Training

- 10.10.2 Whilst there is a training programme for all staff there is some disquiet amongst practitioners that this is too prescriptive and does not build on the Training Needs Analysis approach that has been successfully implemented in some Social Care Departments in the UK. A large part of this approach is to design a training and development programme for

the individual member of staff and is based on access to good quality supervision/mentoring and the design of a development plan for the individual rather than an annual training programme for all staff. Given the complex nature of much of the work undertaken by the staff of this department the individual training needs analysis approach should be considered as part of the overall drive to ensure a high standard of practice.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 Given the intense media interest generated by allegations of abuse at the former Children's Home, Haut de la Garenne, and the very public departure of a former employee of Greenfields Secure Unit, it is not surprising that I found a dispirited work force who feel a lack of public recognition for their work – some of which is of a high standard.
- 11.2 The public response to my series of advertisements was in excess of 65 and of these, 4 involved allegations of abuse whilst in the care of the Children's Service. These have been separately investigated and with the consent of the individuals concerned they were referred to the police.
- 11.3 Considerable effort has been made by both the Police and myself, and my administrative support, to ensure no contacts are lost in the process of redirection and nothing in the process of this inquiry could adversely impact on the Police Inquiry.
- 11.4 To ensure a full and proper record is kept of this process, I have requested that I provided a Witness Statement to the police to assist the official recording of their Inquiry.
- 11.5 I have read a large number of relevant reports produced by the Children's Service and other relevant agencies and these are listed in the Appendices. I have also read with great interest the Report by Professor Kathy Bull, into the Provision of Services for Young People with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Disorders which was submitted to the States of Jersey Government in December 2002. This was commissioned by the Education, Health and Social Services and Home Affairs Committees and was an extensive piece of work culminating in 50 recommendations. The Bull Report, as it is known, marks a significant event in the development of the Children's Service in Jersey. For example it was the Bull report that recommended the establishment of the Children's Executive, with the aim of developing the role of the Corporate Parent within Government.

It also recommended the development of the Fostering and Adoption Service which has seen significant progress over the past year.

- 11.6 Of all the responses to the advertisement the majority expressed some dissatisfaction what they perceived as a lack of quality of the work undertaken with either the complainant or complainant's family. Given the nature of the work undertaken by the Children's Service, it is not surprising to receive such comments, but a common issue that arose throughout was the perception either by individuals or other agencies of difficulty of access to the service.
- 11.7 I have discussed this complaint with the Management Team who, whilst accepting the complaints, believes this reflected a time when the Service was coping with a number of staff vacancies. This has now been rectified and hopefully concerns about the Department's services have improved.
- 11.8 I have made contact with many other agencies working with children on the Island and whilst concern has been expressed at the difficulty of making contact, the general response is that there is a need for a more "joined up" approach to providing services for children and young people. This is not to deny that there is some very good work taking place every day, but more could be achieved if an agreed set of objectives and approaches can be formulated across the Island. To this end the development of a Children's Plan, possibly reviewed on a biannual basis, should provide the necessary framework.
- 11.9 With regard to the provision of appropriate training and development opportunities, there is a training programme and staff joining the department are provided with an induction programme. However, there is a need to ensure these programmes are coherent at the qualifying and post qualifying levels and are also individually tailored to ensure the members of staff meet the requirements for the renewal of their professional registration.
- 11.10 There are currently three residential homes for children and young people managed by the Children's Executive and one home, Brig Y Don, which is owned and managed by a local charitable institution. Two of the homes, Heathfields and La Preference are large buildings that are often underused – mainly as a result of the success of the developing Fostering Service. I understand that the Children's Service is currently in the process of negotiating a new contact with the charity that provides the service at Brig Y Don Home

and is looking at likely future demand for residential provision. Given the continued investment in preventative services and the Adoption and Fostering programme, there is an opportunity to determine future requirements and the potential for development without the need for additional finance.

- 11.11 The third residential home, Greenfields, has been the centre of significant interest. The Centre provides secure accommodation for young people in a newly opened and much praised building. At the time of writing this report, the Howard League for Penal Reform are writing their report following a two visits to Jersey in May and June 2008 which included meeting staff and residents at both Greenfields and La Moye Prison YOI wing. Early indications are that their recommendations will be to do with expanding the role of Greenfields, challenging the use of custodial sentences rather than a welfare approach for young people and establishing a separate policy for youth justice.
- 11.12 It is considered that with some minor alterations more effective use could be made of the building which is an impressive resource in terms of design but more flexibility needs to be built in to the structure to develop opportunities to maximise the resource.
- 11.13 I am pleased that following their initial visit the Howard League have confirmed the view of both Peter Smallridge and myself that the “Grand Prix” system is no longer in operation and a welfare model of care of residents is the prevailing approach.
- 11.14 I have met with the Board of Visitors of Greenfields, looked at all their reports, visited on a number of occasions, met individually with members of staff who have wished to see me, talked to a number of resident young people – again without staff members present or within view and read all the files of young people who have stayed at Greenfields since it opened. I am confident that with the proposed changes the resource will be well used and able to provide a positive influence on the lives of some of the young people of Jersey.
- 11.15 An essential requirement in the provision of a safe, high quality service for children and young people is the encouragement of external advocacy for children looked after by the States. The appointment of an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who would guarantee that personalised planning is provided for all children looked after, and provide external scrutiny of the work carried out by the service. Whilst I accept that attempts have been made to provide this approach, there is an IRO in post who is resident on the Island, a

more transparently independent post would be to the benefit of both the children and young people and their families and the Managers of the Service.

- 11.16 One of the terms of reference of the inquiry was “Child Protection” and whilst I have looked at this service with considerable interest, attended meetings of the JCPC and interviewed members of the Committee, I have been very aware of the work undertaken by Professor June Thoburn.
- 11.17 Professor June Thoburn, was asked by the States of Jersey to review the work of the JCPC and assumed the role of Chair in January 2008, for an initial 12 month period. I have sought to work closely with Professor Thoburn in looking at the work of the JCPC and recommendations to the structure and the terms of reference to ensure the integrity of the Committee and to clarify the status and authority of the JCPC in relation to the Child Protection work on the Island. I am more than satisfied that the work undertaken by Professor Thoburn will achieve these ambitions and lay the foundations for the JCPC to operate effectively and efficiently as a stand alone, authoritative Committee, ensuring the work of the various agencies involved in Child Protection within the Island is of the highest standard, and answerable for its work to the appropriate departments and Ministers and to the people of Jersey.
- 11.18 The Children’s Executive Group meets on a monthly basis. The establishment of the Group was recommended in the Bull Report to develop a “Co-ordinated approach to the delivery of services for children and young people” and I would assume assist in the development of the role of the Corporate Parent for the States of Jersey.
- 11.19 Having looking at the broad papers, interviewed members of the group and attended a meeting of the group I remain unclear as to its function and more importantly the line of accountability to Ministers. This is not to say that the Children’s Executive has no value – indeed the dynamic approach towards rationalising Children’s residential services and the development of groups for children and young people excluded from school demonstrate the value of the Executive but I remain concerned at the Executive’s lack of clear accountability in such an important area of care for children.
- 11.20 The Corporate Parent Group composing Ministers for ESC, HA and HSS is unclear about the actual lines of accountability and in my view such clarity is crucial in this field of

public service. I consider the time may be right to take this development to the next stage and appoint a Minister with responsibility for Children, who would have the over-arching responsibility to ensure the delivery of a coordinated service for all children. The structure and responsibilities of the Children's Executive would then need to be reviewed to ensure the resources of the States of Jersey for Children and Young People are used and developed to best advantage. A good illustration of the need for this work is demonstrated in my judgement in the impressive work of the Jersey Youth Service, while the role of the Youth Action Team (YAT) seems unclear in terms of delivering a comprehensive multi-agency service for young people across the Island. With clearer lines of accountability more can be achieved from the present level of service investment.

- 11.21 Many of the conclusions lead me to recommend a review of the management structure of the Social Services Department and I have held a number of discussions with the Chief Executive of the HSS department to pursue these ideas. As I stated at the outset of these conclusions many staff feel they have been on the receiving end of intense scrutiny and criticism for a long period of time and it is the responsibility of the senior managers to ensure that high quality services are provided for children and young people which use and develop all the skills available within the Department.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 At the conclusion of this extensive investigation into issues relating to child protection in Jersey, I should like to make the following recommendations:
- 1 Create the post of Minister for Children whose responsibilities should be determined following discussions about whether the scope of this role should be for all children or specifically vulnerable children and their families.
 - 2 Re design Children's Executive to report to Minister.
 - 3 Appoint external organisation to review Children's Service on a bi annual basis.
 - 4 Appoint external Reviewing Officer.
 - 5 Establish group representing users of remodelled Children's Service.

- 6 Refine contractual approach to external agencies eg NSPCC Brig Y Don, The Bridge.
- 7 Consider future role of children's residential homes with a possible minor redesign of Greenfields to develop a range of services available at Greenfields.
- 8 Develop a new management structure to ensure all services – CAMHS, YAT, Youth Service and Schools contribute to well being of children and young people.
- 9 Develop whistleblowing policy for all staff.
- 10 Develop a link between the Greenfields Secure Unit and La Moye Youth Offenders Wing with the Jersey Child Protection Committee to ensure that the safeguarding responsibilities are maintained.
- 11 Replace the present Emergency Duty system which uses the Police Service by one which uses 24 hour Health and Social Services availability.

Andrew Williamson

30.06.2008

Acknowledgements

The Inquiry has been complex and demanding - given the parallel running of the major Police Inquiry into alleged abuse at former Children's homes and an employment appeal relating to one of the major Children's resources on the Island.

It has been necessary throughout this process to ensure that my work did not in any way adversely affect the smooth running of the 2 separate enquiries.

I was also aware of the review of the Jersey Child Protection Committee by Professor June Thoburn and the need for this to be independent from my inquiry.

I am assured by all parties mentioned that these various enquiries have not been adversely affected by running concurrently.

This is due in no small measure to the excellent administrative support I have received from Mrs Lyn Houguez of the States Greffe Department and many of her colleagues and Mrs Tina Soley and colleagues from the Chief Minister's Department. I should also like to thank the Greffier of the States of Jersey, Mr Michael de la Haye for his assistance and guidance in understanding the operational systems in Jersey.

Throughout this inquiry I have found all Ministers, Senators and Deputies and staff of the various Departments of the States of Jersey to be helpful and supportive in their responses, as have the Voluntary and Independent agencies. My thanks also to Peter Smallridge, for readily agreeing to work with me, to help me achieve a balanced and thorough approach through all our investigations.

Finally my thanks to those residents of Jersey who made contact with me, not only in relation to their own complaint or experience, but also to help in building a first class Children's Service for the Island of Jersey.

Andrew Williamson
30.06.2008

Review of Child Protection Services

**Have you lived in a children's home?
Have you been involved with Children's Services?
Have you experience of Les Chênes or Greenfields?**

If you have a personal story to tell, Andrew Williamson would like to hear from you.

Mr Williamson has been asked to undertake an independent review of Jersey's care and protection services for children. He is keen to meet anybody who is willing to tell him about their experiences, good or bad. What you have to say may be important in helping him to form an opinion about what has happened in child care in the past, and what should happen in the future.

If you feel that you have a contribution to make to this important review, please contact Mr Williamson's office direct to make an appointment on 441003 or email him at a.williamson2@gov.je

Alternatively, you can make an appointment via the States Greffe on 441013 or e-mail m.delahaye@gov.je

To ensure that the review can investigate any claims thoroughly, all appointments need to be made by 14 December.

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

MEETINGS/VISITS

Greenfields Centre

Les Chenes Residential School

La Preference Children's Home

Heathfields Children's Centre

Brig Y Don Pre School Group

CAMHS – St. Helier

The Bridge – St. Helier

HMP La Moye Young Offenders Wing

Maison La Pape

La Chasse Centre

Le Rocquier School

Pathways Centre – NSPCC

Children's Executive Meeting

Children's Management Meeting

Jersey Child Protection Committee

States of Jersey Police Headquarters

2 meetings – Greenfields Visitors

Additional meetings with Director of Education, Sport and Culture and Directorate; the Manager Social Services

Howard League for Penal Reform

Professor June Thoburn – Chair Jersey Child Protection Committee

DOCUMENTS/REPORTS RECEIVED

Receiving Young People into Greenfields Secure Centre

Services Case Reviews – U.K. Government Publications of Overview Reports of Services Case Reviews

Review of Effectiveness of the Children’s Executive May 2007

Governance Arrangements for the Children’s Executive September 2006

Report on the Children’s Executive 2008

Review of the Principles, Practices and Provisions for Children and Young People with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Disorders in the Island of Jersey Profession. K. Bull December 2002

The Future of Children’s Residential Care – February 2008-06-25 States of Jersey Prison Board of Visitors Report 2007

Review of Principles, Procedures and Practices at Les Chenes School

Report of Jersey Child Protection Committee Early Years Ministry of Education, and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Brig Y Don – children’s Home Statement of Purpose 2002

Brig Y Don Children’s Home – Children’s Guide

States of Jersey Education, Sport and Culture Department Day Care Registration, Police Role and Responsibilities

States of Jersey Education, Sport and Culture Department Child Protection Documentation and Policy

States of Jersey CAMHS Service Review June 2006

Youth Work in Jersey

Jersey Child Protection Committee – Child Protection Training Programme 2008

Jersey Child Protection Committee – Draft Child Protection Training Strategy – 2113

Le Rocquier School – Multi Agency Support Team

States of Jersey – Review of Parenting Services in Jersey 2007

An Integrated Centre for Families and Young People – The Bridge Annual Report 2007

The Pathways Centre – NCPCC

Reports of the Greenfields Visitors

Report and Policy Procedures & Practice at the Greenfields Secure Unit

Grand Prix Documentation

Child Protection Policy and Instruction No. 2 La Moye Prison August 2007

Earned Privileges and Incentives Scheme – La Moye Prison

Report of the Serious Case Review 2007

U.K. Government Report into Rewards and Sanctions in Secure Care Homes

Various Reports from U.K. into Child Protection Services and Safeguarding Boards

Report of Independent Chair of Jersey Child Protection Committee.