

Launch of the evaluation of the CIFIC

Presentation by Teresa Elwes, Grant executive at The Bromley Trust

24 January 2012

When I was six years old my mother read in the Surrey Advertiser, that a woman had been jailed for six months for driving without a license, she was pregnant and had two small children. In response, my mother contacted the court and asked to provide an alternative to prison. It was 1965.

Mrs Baker, Ricky and Conchita came to live with us. Adam was born, and a year later the family emigrated to Australia.

Over the years occasional Christmas cards were exchanged and then one day, about twenty years later, a photograph of my mother's godson arrived-Adam, hardy handsome and in full naval officer uniform. I came across it when I was clearing my mother's papers.

My mother was fuelled by outrage and kindness. She could not imagine what it was like for Mrs Baker to be taken away from her very young children and for her to contemplate giving birth in prison, something that felt disproportionate to the crime. She did not know what we know now. That thousands of children in the UK lose their homes each year when their mother is sent to prison, nor the growing body of evidence that suggests parental imprisonment leads to intergenerational crime.

We can, affect generations.

My name is Teresa Elwes, I run the Bromley Trust. In 2008, 22 grant makers formed a coalition to call for the implementation of the Corston report. A review written by Baroness Corston, and commissioned by the government to look into the treatment of women in the Criminal Justice system. A seminal text that listened closely to women in the sector.

The Corston Independent Funders Coalition, was the first time such a large group of grant makers had come together to work towards a single objective.

The evaluation we are launching today describes what happened next.

Now let me hand over to our host Baroness Corston, before hearing from Julia Kaufmann, the author of the evaluation, and my colleague Liz Cadogan on the future of the Corston Coalition. I will then invite Peter Kilgarriff, our Chair to introduce Crispin Blunt, the parliamentary under -secretary of state for prison and probation.

Thank you all for joining us