

## Agricultural route to reducing reoffending

A new partnership between West Mercia Probation Trust and Willowdene Care Farm in Shropshire is delivering results for offenders with a high risk of reoffending or substance misuse problems.



Offenders at Willowdene work towards a Specified Activity Requirement (SAR) called Care Farm Skills Training. Over 14 weeks they have about 175 hours of contact focused on skills enhancement, training and preparing for employment.

Training on offer includes animal husbandry, agriculture, forestry operations, woodwork, plumbing and IT skills. Offenders gain a minimum of two nationally recognised

qualifications, with potential to achieve up to six more.

Visiting Willowdene recently Ian Porée, NOMS Director of Commissioning and Commercial, said: "The innovative approach the trust has taken to align sentencer priorities for a credible specified activity requirement, offender needs and a proven high quality partner is an excellent example of local commissioning delivering impressive public value."

The SAR was developed after a successful pilot programme between the trust and Willowdene, using funding from NOMS. Its success has already enabled the trust to de-commission some of its general offending behaviour programmes and instead commission places for offenders at the farm, while a social enterprise established at Willowdene will help subsidise the programme and ensure its long term sustainability.

## Prison workshop grabs Kia car

A collaborative effort has secured a Kia Sorento for HMP Wayland. Steve Boyns and Kevin Symington of HMP Wayland's motor repair workshop and Stuart Staples of A4e, Wayland's education provider, have negotiated with the Norfolk Motor Group to secure the car for the prison.

It will be used to help prisoners gain valuable qualifications to prepare them for law-abiding lives once they are released. Stuart said: "Our vehicles and parts have started to become extremely dated so I was delighted when Kia answered our appeal for parts, equipment and vehicles for the prison."

