

Prisoners' families have more than one sentence to deal with:

"You may lose your home"

"You may lose most of the family income"

"Your children's behaviour may deteriorate"

"You may not be able to visit very often"

"You may become ill – physically or mentally"

"The neighbours may shun you"

"Your family may disown you"

Families Outside is the only organisation in Scotland which works exclusively on behalf of spouses, partners, parents, children and other family members of prisoners.

We work to raise awareness and influence policy and services for families affected by imprisonment in Scotland.

We provide a free confidential national Helpline available to anyone who has a family member or friend in custody in Scotland which enables and empowers families by offering information, support and a signposting service

We undertake research, development and deliver training independently and in partnership with a range of agencies which have a role to play in meeting the needs of families affected by imprisonment.

We work positively with the Scottish Prison Service, Local Authorities and other statutory and voluntary bodies in order to achieve positive change for families affected by imprisonment.

All publications referred to in this report can be obtained from

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year has been characterised by change and development both within Families Outside and through raising our profile and impact. The Scottish Executive and a number of agencies have become increasingly aware of what we are trying to do, and of the difficulties that families face when a member is imprisoned. One of the fundamental problems is that of maintaining contact when home and prison are far apart.

A significant achievement for us therefore was the launch of the Survey into Travel at a very successful AGM in October 2003; you will read more about the survey findings in this report.

Earlier in the year a review of the Prisoners Families Information Line reminded us of the complexity of the practical issues to be dealt with and the emotional impact on the "families outside". So many callers appreciated just having a listening ear at a time of great stress. In order to better describe what the service offers we have renamed it the "Scottish Prisoners Families Helpline".

The work of the Tayside Families Project (page 9) confirms the need for services where families can get face to face support in their communities and we will continue to press for this throughout Scotland.

We moved to more appropriate premises in May and during the year significantly improved our financial position by securing grants from new Trust bodies to support our core costs. We were delighted to be told of a successful outcome to a funding application to the Children and Families division of the Scottish Executive. That another branch of the Executive is supportive of our work is tremendously encouraging.

Although delays in payment from the Diana Fund have postponed our Teenager project objectives, work with the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland on this issue has begun very positively.

I am grateful to fellow Board members for their enthusiasm and support. We all are grateful to our Director and her team for their commitment; they have worked so hard to put Families Outside "on the map".

Lady Cullen of Whitekirk
Chairman

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

"I heard your director's presentation at the conference ... I am not a Criminal Justice practitioner, and I found it an eye-opener. It could be very good for people with no knowledge of the system"¹

Our experience over the past year has been that raising awareness of the needs of families affected by imprisonment is very good for people who do have knowledge of the Criminal Justice system! Or of the health, social care and children's and families' systems which can and should respond to these needs.

We are therefore pleased to have achieved a significantly higher profile for the issue through our involvement in national conferences and events including those held by SACRO, Children in Scotland, SPS, ADSW and the Community Practitioners and Health Visitor Association.

We are members of strategic and policy groups within SPS, the Scottish Executive and the Voluntary sector and have contributed to enquiries currently being undertaken by Audit Scotland and the Scottish Council Foundation. We provided a written response to the Justice 1 Committee enquiry into rehabilitation in prisons and have subsequently been invited to meet with them.

We have particularly welcomed the opportunity presented by the Scottish Executive's consultation on Reducing Reoffending and the recognition in the consultation document of the negative impact of imprisonment on family relationships (particularly on children). Dr Nancy Loucks research for the Tayside Families Project highlights the damaging effect of even very short periods of custody on families and yet research also evidences the effect of supportive family relationships on reconviction rates.

Our response therefore emphasises the need to make maintenance and development of family relationships "core business" for the Scottish Prison Service. We also emphasise the need for families to have their own support needs met in the community to mitigate the emotional, social, financial, health and, for children, educational impacts of imprisonment. This is whether families maintain contact with their relative in prison or not.

However, where families can play a role in reducing reoffending there is an opportunity to create a genuine partnership by providing the support they need themselves - to be able to support their relative, in prison and on release.

I hope this report demonstrates how Families Outside is working to raise awareness of this vital area of need with policy makers and service providers across the spectrum of social and criminal justice interests in Scotland.

Angela Morgan
Director

¹ Email received from delegate to conference on Reducing Reoffending

“CAN YOU HELP ME GET TO PRISON?”

Prisons are often in out of the way places and many families rely on public transport when visiting their relatives in prison.

We know one lady who travels for five hours on a train and two buses from Lochgilphead to Greenock for a 45 minute visit with two small children in tow. That means five hours back on two buses and a train.

Another man was trying to plan to visit his brother in Inverness jail. He lived in John O’Groats. The bus couldn’t get him to Inverness in time for a visit. Even if it did, the bus back left 30 minutes before his bus arrived.

It was calls like this to the Helpline that prompted us to carry out the travel survey, ‘A Review of Services for Families Accessing Scottish Prisons’ which was completed in the autumn of 2003. We focused on the seven most inaccessible prisons in Scotland.

The key findings showed that:

- 46% of visitors relied on public transport
- 44% travelled with children, nearly half of whom were under 5 years old
- Over 30% had to use more than 2 different modes of transport
- It took 40% of families **between 5 and 12 hours** to make an entire journey including a visit. For over 18% it took longer than 12 hours.
- Costs ranged from under £10 to over £200. (Not all these people met the criteria in order to qualify for the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme).
- Over 51% of those travelling by public transport found it difficult to use.
- Less than 58% of families had heard of the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme

“The cost of travel was an issue, with some noting that any kind of work seems to count against claims through the Assisted Prison Visits Unit even if this was part-time work for minimum wage. Another family mentioned that the cost of travel for children who were not the prisoner’s own children could not be claimed, which had caused difficulty for them.”

The Tayside Family Project
Dr. Nancy Loucks on behalf of Tayside Criminal Justice Partnership and Families Outside July 2004

“You may not be able to visit very often”

The Report highlighted:

- How someone gets to a prison is a major factor for families who want to maintain contact with a relative in prison. The report highlights the practical, financial and information difficulties which families face.
- Existing transport arrangements are limited or carried out on an ad hoc basis. These arrangements need to be co-ordinated and clearly publicised for everyone who may visit.
- For some families the lack of accessible transport may result in loss of vital contact. For others, the cost in terms of time and money may increase an already stressful situation. There should also be a review of provision of financial support for those who meet the eligibility criteria.

The Report recommends action by a number of agencies. The SPS has responded positively to the key recommendation that they should take the lead role in developing a strategic approach to providing accessible transport for families visiting Scottish prisons and we are working to ensure that this remains a priority for them.

“A common suggestion from visitors was for visiting times to be reviewed during the winter months to enable visitors travelling long distances, and often by public transport, to travel in the daylight”

A Review of Services for Families Accessing Scottish Prisons
Families Outside 2003

“Almost two thirds (63%) of prisoners reported that their visitors experienced problems when visiting them in prison, an increase of 11 percentage points on 2002 figures...The problem reported most frequently by prisoners was the distance of the prison from their home (64%).”

The Sixth Prison Survey
Scottish Prison Service 2004

SCOTTISH PRISONERS' FAMILIES HELPLINE

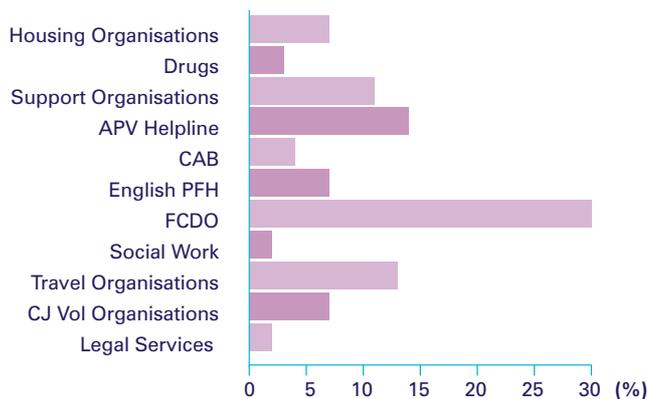
During the last year the work of the Scottish Prisoners' Families Helpline has developed and expanded:

- The total number of calls for the year April 2003 to March 2004 increased by one third to over 1700. Over 2000 issues were addressed. This indicates that our profile has grown and more families have had access to our publicity material.
- The name of the Helpline changed from the Prisoners' Families Information Line to the Scottish Prisoners' Families Helpline to reflect the nature and increase in the complexity of calls which we receive. We have had a number of calls which have taken up to four hours to deal with where we have intervened on a caller's behalf and offered follow up. Nearly 100 callers expressed concern about a prisoner's welfare ranging from general concern to suicide and self-harm.
- We have had the privilege of working with a group of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to whom we give our thanks. However, the increase in the complexity of calls at the same time as some of the volunteers moving on led us to review service delivery. We have consequently taken action to reduce dependency of the helpline service on volunteers and employ sessional staff.
- We have attended national Family Contact Development Officer (FCDO) meetings which have been constructive and are involved in taking a number of initiatives forward. The ongoing relationships with the Scottish Prison Service FCDOs and HQ staff is crucial to our work and we have developed a positive approach with both SPS and with HMP Kilmarnock by providing joint training to new prison officer recruits.
- There has been an increase in calls from professionals, especially social workers.

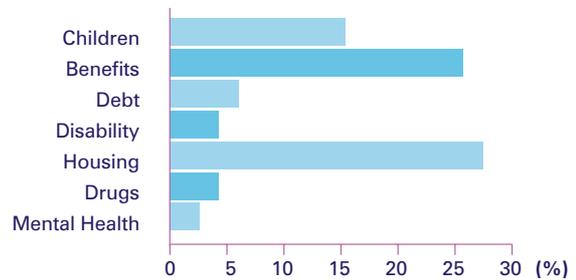
Callers Issues



Where callers signposted to



Social welfare issues



The key themes arising from calls to the Helpline continue to show that when a relative is imprisoned the overriding needs of families are to have basic information, to be kept informed and involved, and to feel supported.

An analysis of calls shows that

- Signposting callers to local and specialised services is an integral part of the service.
- Social welfare issues such as the impact of a custodial sentence on housing, benefits and debt continue to show some of the major repercussions that imprisonment has on a family.
- The lack of direct services for families affected by imprisonment continues to be a source of frustration for both families and Helpline staff alike.

“You may lose most of the family income”

SCOTTISH PRISONERS' FAMILIES HELPLINE CONTINUED

Our targets for the next year are to:

- Set up a database to enable us to provide a more detailed analysis of calls
- Improve links with the Scottish Court Service and Witness Service
- Establish and develop links with professionals providing services for children such as Health Visitors, and Homestart
- Target more community organisations and agencies outwith SPS
- Provide consistency by employing paid sessional staff and piloting new Helpline times
- Increase awareness of our service with Local Authority Social Work Criminal Justice Throughcare teams and monitor the level of contact

Adrienne Hunt
Support Manager

“You may lose your home”

NEW FACT SHEETS

Families need basic information to help them come to terms with what has happened to their loved one. To help address these issues we have developed a series of fact sheets about issues which we get asked about most often.

- Where to go for help
- Concerned about suicide or self harm
- Visiting someone in a Scottish prison
- Travel & transport to Scottish prisons & help with travel expenses
- Transfers
- Time in custody
- Talking to children about imprisonment
- Visiting prison with your child

Our next objective is to develop booklets for parents and children affected by imprisonment.

“PRISON WITHOUT BARS” THE TAYSIDE FAMILIES PROJECT

While research has been conducted on the benefits to people in custody of maintaining family ties, little work has been done on prisoners’ families as a distinct group in need of support in their own right.

At the end of 2003, the Tayside Criminal Justice Partnership and Families Outside commissioned research¹ into the specific needs of prisoners’ families with the aim of identifying which services would best support families to maintain contact with their relative in prison with a view to their successful resettlement and rehabilitation.

STAGE 1: REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE ON RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The key findings are entirely coherent with our experience from the Scottish Prisoners Families Helpline:

THE IMPACT OF IMPRISONMENT ON FAMILIES:

“Imprisonment is a family experience. For prisoners, separation from loved ones is often the most painful consequence of incarceration. Families suffer the pain of separation but also feel the impact of imprisonment in other ways, such as loss of income, loss of home, deterioration in physical and mental health, disturbed behaviour by children in distress, and shame”

“Children of prisoners are at higher risk of imprisonment themselves in later life.

Physical symptoms, mental health problems, and regressive behaviour such as bed-wetting can also begin with the incarceration of a parent or other family member”

“Children can react badly even after very short periods of separation. Much of the damage may be caused by the arrest and imprisonment itself, regardless of the length of time in custody”

“Overall the effects of imprisonment on prisoners’ families include stigma and fear of disclosure; deterioration of health; maternal depression; reduction of income; increased demands from the imprisoned partner such as material help or more problematic requests such as drug supply; and strains on the quality of care to children. In living the life in effect of a single parent and spending all free time in travel and visits to prison, partners of prisoners have described their own lives as “living in a prison without bars”

“Prison Without Bars” Dr N Loucks on behalf of Tayside Criminal Justice Partnership and Families Outside. 2004

¹ Both stages of the project were undertaken by Dr Nancy Loucks

“Your children’s behaviour may deteriorate”

“PRISON WITHOUT BARS”

THE TAYSIDE FAMILIES PROJECT CONTINUED

MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF IMPRISONMENT ON FAMILIES:

“No single organisation is responsible for the direct coordination and provision of services to prisoners’ families and few organisations formally acknowledge prisoners’ families as a distinct group within the remit of their work... Even with Family Support staff in prisons, a specific ‘voice’ or advocate for children is virtually non-existent. The need for information in courts, prior to imprisonment, is another obvious gap in information for families. Preparation for release, better linkages with community-based social structures, and support services need further development.”

“Often the need is not so much to fill gaps as to strengthen the resources already available. Resources for schools and information on visiting prisons... support groups, parenting programmes, Visitors’ Centres, more consultation with families, trained volunteers for family support, rebuilding relationships as part of a prison’s pre-release scheme, and improved play provision. Information and support for carers, young people, and professionals is a further area for development.”

“... the failure of so many general support services to recognise and plan specifically for prisoners’ families as part of their remit seems to be a glaring oversight that emphasises yet again the fact that this group is easily and usually overlooked.”

STAGE 2: SURVEY OF FAMILIES NEEDS IN THE TAYSIDE AREA.²

THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES

Family members were asked to identify the **main difficulties** that imprisonment of their relative had created for them.

Amidst a whole range of difficulties, the direct impact of imprisonment - namely separation from a loved one and barriers to contact with that person is highlighted . Some families worried about the implications this could have for the prisoner’s ability to adjust on release, especially where home circumstances have changed during imprisonment:

“I was pregnant when my partner was taken into custody, now that I’ve had my child I worry that my partner will not have the same bond with him as he should have. I also worry about how my partner will react on his release now that there is a child in the house that wasn’t there before.”

Worry about the prisoner	88%
Separation from the prisoner	77%
Worry about what will happen after release	60%
Cost of travel for visits	56%
Lack of information	44%
Lack of support	40%
Transportation to the prison	38%
Timing of visits	38%
What to tell others	38%
Financial problems	33%
Worry about the family	23%
Housing	23%
Media attention	19%
Loss of friends	17%
Employment	6%

“You may become ill – physically or mentally”

THE IMPACT

Given the range of difficulties encountered it is not surprising that two-thirds of families believed the emotional well-being of themselves and their family had deteriorated. A sense of their own imprisonment was not uncommon:

“you feel like you’re in jail yourself”

“I feel I’m paying the price for his mistake.”

Almost as many people believed they had suffered financially due to the imprisonment and significant numbers also reported being worse off in terms of their physical health and safety, social and family life, state benefits, and family support.

MOST USEFUL SUPPORT

Better provision of information stood out as a priority and good quality family contact was also a prominent request:

“I would like it if my partner could spend more quality time with his son. His actions should not punish the rest of the family. I don’t think it’s right that an innocent child should have to pay.”

STAGE 3: RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS

The next stage of the project is currently being developed to respond to the evident needs for improved family support using the framework of the Tayside Throughcare and Voluntary assistance strategies.

Beyond its local effect we will be promoting the outcomes of this project in order to achieve a sustainable influence and impact across Scotland.

Preparation for release	64%
Info about parole/ non-parole licences	59%
Info about what organisations can do for ex-prisoners	59%
More info about the prisoner	55%
Advice about how to keep the prisoner out of trouble in the future	50%
Better quality of contact	48%
Info about what social work staff can offer to ex-prisoners	47%
More contact with the person inside	43%
More info about the prison	41%
Someone to talk to	34%
Financial help and advice	32%
More support for children	25%
Help with child care	11%
Advice on what to tell others	9%
Housing	9%

ACCOUNTS

We are pleased to be finishing the year with a close to break-even position and we would like to thank all all our funders for their vital support.

The Board continue to review and update its strategy to secure resources required for our future activity and the good news is that we have secured three years funding from the Scottish Executive. This along with our other sources of funding has improved the financial stability of the organisation. The year has seen us implement changes to our financial and reporting systems and these are continually monitored and reviewed through our Finance & HR subgroup.

Mairi McReynolds ACCA
Treasurer

Summary of Account	Year to 31/3/04	Year to 31/3/03
Income		
Scottish Prison Service	21551	22510
Princess Diana Fund	19750	32750
Tudor Trust	17134	35366
Robertson Trust	8000	2000
The Gannochy Trust	15000	
The Lankelly Foundation	15000	
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	18800	
Other	7976 *	3539
	<u>123211</u>	<u>96165</u>
Expenditure		
Fundraising and Publicity	118	800
Direct Charitable Expenditure	98523	57465
Support Costs	24102	21434
Management & admin	2372	3368
	<u>125115</u>	<u>83067</u>
Net (outgoing)/income resources for the period	-1904	13098
Balances brought forward at 31 March 2003	36533	23435
Balances carried forward at 31 March 2004	<u>34629 **</u>	<u>36533</u>

This is a summary of our audited accounts for April 2003 - March 2004. Full accounts can be obtained by contacting Families Outside.

*We would like to thank the following for their donations: Crudens Foundation, HMYOI Polmont (football tournament), SPS Common Good Funds, Premier Prisons and the Imlay Foundation.

**Comprises £10,296 unrestricted and £24,333 restricted funds.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

APRIL 2003 – MARCH 2004

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Kate Philbrick Kids VIP – Vice Chairman
Thomas Buyers – Treasurer (to October 2003)
Mairi McReynolds – Treasurer (from October 2003)
Sue Brookes – HMP Cornton Vale
Joe Connolly – NCH Action for Children
John McAuley – Gingerbread
Bernadette Monaghan – APEX Scotland
Ian Patrick – Salvation Army
Ian Tierney – Hope
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Lisa Rodgers – (to October 2003)
Laura Sutherland – (from October 2003)
Brian Gowans
June Cowan – (from October 2003)
Diana Deeney – (from October 2003)

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Margaret Anderson – Chairperson ADSW
Throughcare Subgroup

STAFF

Angela Morgan – Director
Adrienne Hunt – Support Manager
Susan Milligan – Administrative Officer

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