



supporting families affected by imprisonment



Celebrating 30 years of working together to support children and families affected by imprisonment in Scotland

Chair's Report

This is my first report as Chair of the Board of Trustees, although I have been on the Board for a number of years. The last year has seen Families Outside adapt to a new post-Covid landscape, which has brought with it hybrid working, recruitment challenges, and financial uncertainty. Staff have settled into a pattern of remote and face-to-face working, ensuring family support has been kept at the very centre of their work, whether that is through direct family support, external engagement, or keeping the day-to-day business running. We saw a number of staff move on to pastures new and welcomed new staff to the team who have brought enthusiasm and expertise.

With the new chairmanship, we reviewed and refreshed our aims and values whilst always keeping a watchful eye on governance matters, alongside the wellbeing of the organisation and its people. We visited HMP Edinburgh in January 2022 and were given a highly informative tour of the prison and the visitor centre, meeting residents and families. All trustees recognised how valuable this visit was to inform the work we do, and we plan to visit more prisons next year.

We are sad to be losing three of our trustees Kevin Havelock, Andrew Fraser, and Richard Murray this autumn as they come to the end of their term with Families Outside. I would like to thank them for everything they have contributed during their time on the Board, and they will be very much missed. I would also like to thank current trustees for their ongoing commitment and look forward to our year ahead.

Families Outside has enjoyed many important achievements over the last year, as you will see in this report. It goes without saying that none of the work of Families Outside would be possible without the incredible team of staff, so ably led by Nancy and the Senior Management Team. I would like to thank everyone at Families Outside for their dedication and hard work in supporting the families at the heart of our work. I feel proud to be part of such an important and highly respected organisation and look forward to the year ahead.

Linda Bendle
Chair

Chief Executive's Report

In concluding our 30th year, we entered a time of unprecedented change. The staff team worked hard to support families in the transition beyond COVID-related restrictions while navigating the same territory for themselves. With in-person visits to prisons resuming but down by 91% compared to pre-pandemic levels, our need to find new ways to reach families became increasingly clear. The need for our work was, however, as evident as ever.

We have seen many successes alongside the challenges. We had three training modules accredited for the first time and developed a series of family induction videos. We completed work commissioned by the Scottish Government and Scottish Prison Service exploring the use of video calls into prisons. Our ongoing work on the financial impact of imprisonment underlined the desperate situation families were in even before the cost of living crisis worsened – findings crucial to inform our efforts in the new financial year. The Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody was published, including a family-specific report and establishment of a new model of family participation we are now expanding to other areas of our work.

I am pleased to share our progress over 2021-22 with you. This includes a much-needed increase in our reserves; incredible dedication, energy, and tenacity from our staff; and increasing velocity of input to policy consultations and research locally, nationally, and internationally. Families Outside can only achieve its outcomes through devoted and hard-working staff, students, and volunteers as well as a tremendously well-qualified and supportive Board. I welcome the energy and expertise from Chair Linda Bendle and Vice-Chair David Mackie and am incredibly grateful to departing Treasurer Kevin Havelock and Trustees Andrew Fraser and Richard Murray. I am also grateful for the continued interest and support of our funders; of the many agencies we work alongside; and especially of the families who share their experiences and expertise with us. Our work would not be possible without you.

Prof Nancy Loucks OBE
Chief Executive

Support & Information Service

Refocusing from the Helpline to a wider Support & Information Service...

Through a mix of phone calls, webchat enquiries, email, and social media, the Families Outside Support & Information Service responds to thousands of enquiries from families each year, providing non-judgmental support and information. Contacts to our Helpline service, while still high, returned to a more normal level compared to the previous year.

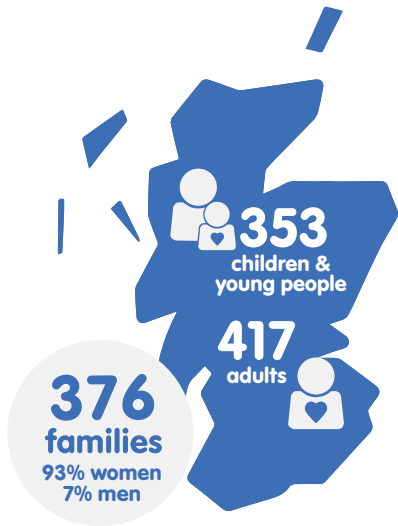
While emotional support remains a key reason people reach out to us, the highest proportion of contacts to our Helpline this year were from callers asking about visits and contact, followed by people with a concern for someone in prison. Both of these showed that the impact of COVID and related restrictions remained an ongoing concern for families.



"Speaking to you helped me to relax and reassured me when I was worried about my son's mental health. You have done more for me than anyone else, I can't fault you. You've been excellent."

Regional Support

Our team of Regional Family Support Coordinators, based across Scotland from the Borders to the Highlands & Islands, provide direct face-to-face support to families. The continuing COVID-related restrictions for much of the year reduced these opportunities, with support provided primarily via telephone or video links. As restrictions eased, staff were grateful to resume in-person contact where it was safe to do so. Overall, referrals remained lower, as restrictions continued on and off, and in-person visits to prisons remained low. However, the total number of contacts with families remained high, reflecting the ongoing needs families experienced as a result of the pandemic.



"...it's a strange time we're going through and i can't tell you how grateful i am for your guidance and support. I really appreciate your help i really you have helped me if u need anyone i am there even though things are the way they are. thank you for your help it does mean the world to me. I will stay in touch. ALL the best to you and Families Outside honestly you guys all deserve high recognition for the painstaking efforts you all endeavour. Thank you 😊"

Training and Awareness-Raising

Continued lockdown restrictions meant that delivery of community- or prison-based training and awareness raising events did not take place for most of the year. We adapted more of our delivery to online models, including the National Prison Visitor Centre conference and a series of four family induction webinars, now available as a permanent resource on our website:



In June 2021, we successfully gained accreditation from CPD UK for three training modules, namely:

- **Prison and Prison Visiting**
- **Keeping Connected**
- **Supporting Children and Young People**
- **Coming Home**

- **Module 1: Understanding the issues for families affected by imprisonment**
- **Module 2: Supporting children and young people with a family member in prison**
- **Module 3: Prison and prison visiting**

Practice Learning

Social Work student placements contribute to one-to-one family support, group work, the Helpline, distribution of the Winter Hardship Fund, and participation in research.

This year, Families Outside provided six placements to students from four Scottish Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). This included a new extended 120-day placement. Students were from undergraduate and post-graduate streams, and we were pleased to partner with one HEI for the first time. **A student based with our East team said,**

"I have very much enjoyed the time here and learnt a lot. It has been a pleasure to support families with the emphasis so strongly on support and I have enjoyed the variety within my caseload! The richness of experience of Groupwork has been second to none, with adults and young people, online and in-person. I have learnt about disenfranchised grief and seen how much of a need there is for Families Outside to support families who are largely marginalised and overlooked, in public and political discourse. The biggest thing I will take from the placement is to include family as a significant part of any Justice orientated social work report I write."

Another student said,

"The learning opportunities I have had on placement with Families outside have not only met but exceeded my expectations...I will never forget them. I will always remember the organisation in my future role as a social worker... I will be able to share my knowledge of the organisation and recommend the service to families and my other social worker colleagues."

One HEI fed back:

"I thought that the learning opportunities for the social work student were excellent. I liked that they had so many different examples of working directly with children and adults, both face to face and virtually."

Influencing Change

Families Outside contributed to 21 consultations and research projects, the most prominent of which included work alongside HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland and Chair of the Scottish Human Rights Commission as co-Chairs of the Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody. This included setting up and supporting a Family Advisory Group that contributed to the Review for its duration and created a model for future direct participation. Other input included:

- Scottish Prison Service Strategy for Women in Custody 2021-25
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care
- Together Scotland's annual State of Children's Rights report
- NHS Scotland's Bereavement Charter
- National Care Service Consultation
- National Strategy for Community Justice Review Consultation
- COVID Recovery Bill
- Scottish Government GIRFEC Stakeholder consultation
- Bail and Release from Custody Bill consultation
- Response to the Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Coronavirus)(Scotland) Amendment Rules 2022
- Research on Child Impact Assessments for children with a mother in the criminal justice system

"... the maintenance of personal connections and family contact are essential to the lives of people in SPS care and, of course, their families."
Cabinet Secretary for Justice, 12 January 2022



We also released **7 publications**, including **two for children**, one of which was written by a 9-year old girl whose father was in prison. A third edition of the **Framework for Support to Families Affected by Imprisonment** and accompanying **Supporting Document** were released, and we produced a **family-focused report** to accompany the main report of the Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody.

Prison Visitors' Centres

Families Outside continues to provide the national coordinating role for Prison Visitors' Centres in Scotland.

This year saw the return of physical visits, albeit sporadic, across the prison estate and therefore a reopening of prison visitors' centres. Our National Prison Visiting Lead supported providers to reopen their centres in a safe way, continuing a positive working relationship with the Scottish Prison Service. She routinely supported Centres in keeping visitors up to date with rules and regulations when visiting a prison and in encouraging transparency from the Scottish Prison Service.

This year saw the Prison Visiting Lead liaise with the Scottish Government and SPS to plan the distribution of Lateral Flow Tests to visitors, hopefully reducing the transmission of the virus into prisons. She also progressed the display of public health messaging in partnership with the Scottish Government and prison visitor centre providers.



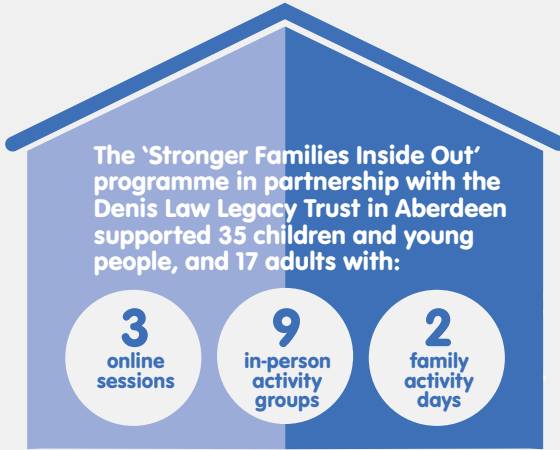
200
delegates

registered to attend the **National Prison Visitors' Centre Conference online, providing an excellent opportunity for the centres to showcase the services they provided during the pandemic**

Our National Prison Visiting Lead has continued to support visitors' centre providers to continue to work towards the outcomes within the National Performance Framework for Visitors' Centres in Scotland, whilst negotiating the legacy of Covid-19.

Peer Support

Our Group Work & Peer Support team has created a variety of local and national group work sessions delivered virtually via zoom, or in person (where possible) to support children, young people and adults affected by a family member's imprisonment.



"Thank you for doing this today, I just can't afford to pay for things like this."

"It's so nice to just be with other people in the same situation as me."

"It makes you feel better, talking about what happened."

Through the forming of a Group Work & Peer Support working group, we were able for the first time to plan and deliver 4 online peer support projects specifically for adults affected by imprisonment.



Winter Hardship Fund



With funding from the Scottish Government's **Winter Hardship Fund**, we provided hardship grants totalling nearly

£50,000
to 100 families

providing support with utility bill debts, food vouchers, bedding, clothing and household appliances.



Through our **Discretionary Fund**, we provided emergency financial assistance totalling

£2,382
to families



Aims for 2022–23

For the 2022-23 financial year, Families Outside commits to sustaining the high quality and evidence-based support we provide for families through direct support, training and awareness-raising, and development of policy and practice. Specifically, the 2022-23 period will include:

+

Increased participation from families to ensure that families inform everything we do

+

Recovery from the impact of the pandemic both for our staff and for the families they support

+

Action research on the financial impact of imprisonment and on maintaining relationships between siblings who are in care and in prison

+

Incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

+

Support for the implementation of the recommendations from the Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody

We look forward to reporting on our progress.

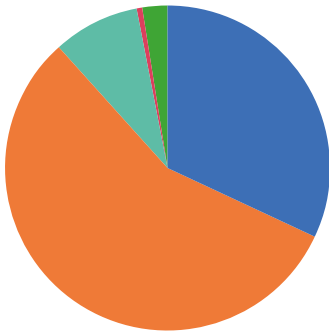


“Early next year, we will hold a round-table discussion to inform the next steps for progressing the [Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody] recommendations. I am very open to discussion with the chief inspector of prisons and Families Outside, which I have mentioned, on how the views of families and the family advisory group can best be heard in that round-table discussion and how they can help to inform and shape the progress of the recommendations. We will not get to the place where we need to be if we do not have that input from the people who are most affected.” Cabinet Secretary for Justice, 30 November 2021

Finance

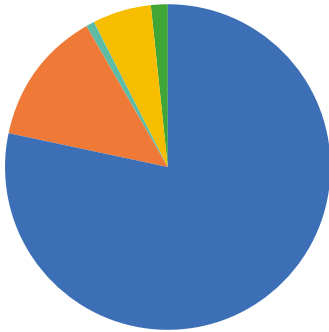
Families Outside had a steady year with our income in line with our expenditure. With savings largely down to recurring gaps in staffing, we have moved into 2022/2023 with a near full staff compliment and a secure income base. As such, we have already turned our attention to funding for 2023/2024 and beyond.

We would like to thank the many organisations, charitable trusts (both large and small), local authorities, and statutory agencies, along with the many individuals who donated funds to Families Outside during the year. Without your help, we could not provide the support we give to families affected by imprisonment in Scotland.



Income 2021/2022

- Statutory income – £397,693
- Charitable Trusts and companies – £702,457
- Local Authority – £105,925
- Donations – £7,587
- Other income – £29,651



Expenditure 2021/2022

- Staff costs – £874,717
- Activity costs – £149,213
- Governance – £10,330
- Office running and premises costs – £64,625
- Other expenditure – £17,471

Families Outside is the only national charity that works solely to support the families of people affected by imprisonment in Scotland. Our purpose is to improve outcomes for children and families affected by imprisonment so they can live lives free from stigma and disadvantage.

For information and support:

Freephone 0800 254 0088

Text FAMOUT followed by your message to 60777

Email support@familiesoutside.org.uk

Visit www.familiesoutside.org.uk

