



www.familiesoutside.org.uk

families
outside

supporting
families affected
by imprisonment

Impact Report

2022 - 2023



Chair's Report

Families Outside has seen another busy and productive year. We have significantly increased our international work, with the expertise of our Chief Executive frequently being sought on a global stage - testament to the high regard in which the organisation is held – and valuable learning for us in return.

Families Outside has enjoyed many successes over the last year, not least our 30th anniversary celebrations. I was delighted to be a part of the 30th anniversary film which is a great reflection of the work of Families Outside. As a family member affected by imprisonment, I was especially pleased that families were central to the film, reinforcing why the work of Families Outside is so vital. The National Prison Visitor Centre conference in June 2022 was also a great success in spite of a last-minute move online because of rail strikes. Focusing on the experience of prison visits for young people, delegates were treated to sessions which included looking at the UNCRC and its incorporation in Scotland, the financial impact of imprisonment on families, and the impact of trauma on young people. The Families Outside National Conference in October 2022 was outstanding, and there was a real buzz on the day about what people could do within their own organisations to effect change for families affected by imprisonment. I was delighted to see such a high representation from the families themselves at the event too. The feedback I personally received on the conference was overwhelmingly positive.

The Board of Trustees was delighted to welcome new trustees to the Board in autumn 2022, who brought new expertise to help drive the organisation forward. Our 2022 Away Day focused on reviewing and revising the 2023-2026 Strategy to reflect the ambition and boldness of the organisation. The new Strategy incorporates a rights-based approach across all of our work, whilst striving for excellence in service delivery and external engagement. The Board looks forward to working with the staff team to deliver on this work. The Board has also been involved in the work being carried out across the organisation to make it trauma-informed. We see this as a way of being that should be felt across the whole organisation, recognising the importance of being trauma-responsive in our work with each other, and with the families we support.

The incredible work of Families Outside would not be possible without Nancy, the Senior Management Team, and the wider staff team. I would like to thank them all for their commitment, professionalism and passion in supporting the families at the heart of our work. I am proud to be involved with such a vital and highly respected organisation and look forward to the year ahead.

Linda Bendle
Chair

Chief Executive's Report

Every year, I tell myself that this is the time to consolidate and focus on sustaining what we have, yet every year, we manage to find new and amazing opportunities to strengthen and grow our work.

This year included a return to in-person delivery of training as well as our first in-person national conference since 2018. We re-opened a Glasgow office and brought in new senior managers and communications staff, as well as a new Support & Participation team to grow our direct input from families. We concluded our 20-month project on the financial impact of imprisonment for families, and the actions to deliver on this will continue for the foreseeable future. Our Board has fully embraced our international work, recognising the value of this to build what we learn and share in our efforts to support children and families affected by imprisonment. We continue to support the implementation of the recommendations from the Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody. This includes continued support for families to be directly involved in this work, sadly with increasing numbers.

I am grateful to our Board and to our funders for helping our staff team and the families we support through a deepening financial crisis. The people we work with are already living in the most difficult circumstances, and the political and economic issues they face locally and nationally simply add to this burden. Families and the professionals who support them tell us on a daily basis about the importance of our work and the difference we make. Such feedback reassures us that we are on the right track.

I am pleased to share our progress over the 2022-23 financial year with you. This includes a much-needed increase in our reserves; incredible dedication, energy, and tenacity from our staff, a growing number of whom have direct experience of the issues we work to address; and increasing input to policy consultations and research locally, nationally, and internationally. Families Outside can only achieve its outcomes through a devoted and hard-working team of staff, students, and volunteers as well as a tremendously well-qualified and supportive Board. I am incredibly grateful to departing Trustee Mark Bell and departing Board Advisor Steve Barrett for their dedication and service. I am enormously appreciative of 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.

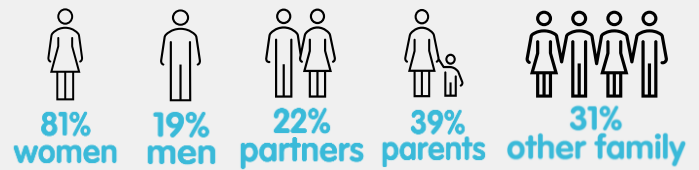
Prof Nancy Loucks OBE
Chief Executive

Support & Information Service

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.



Our Helpline remains the first 'port of call' for most people accessing our services, finding us themselves primarily via our website and social media.



"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."

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.

Of 3,447 issues:

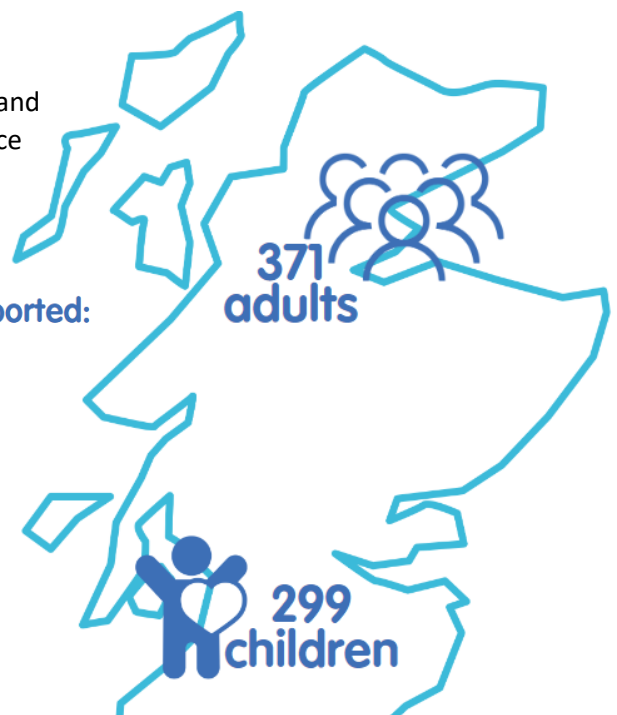
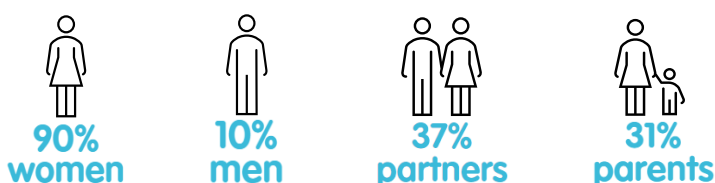


Regional Support

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. Our staff worked tirelessly to reconnect with key agencies and referral sources such as prison staff, schools, and social work teams.

In 2022-23, our Regional Family Support Coordinators supported:

352 families / 670 individuals with 7,459 enquiries



"I would have been totally lost without the support of [RFSC]. She has enabled me to find myself again and I can see a light at the end of a very dark tunnel. Thank you Families Outside."

Of 2,126 issues:



19%
emotional
support



14%
visits & contact



10%
concern for
person in prison



10%
concern for
children



10%
information
about prison

"I was very glad when I was contacted by the worker as I was at my wits' end. The worker made me realise I wasn't to blame and put me in contact with other people that could help me, and all this was done at my choice. I was really grateful for the help."

Support & Participation

In September 2022, we started to develop a Support & Participation model that aims to work not only for families, but with families.

"People take talking to others about their life for granted, we don't get to do that. It's not the kind of thing you can open up to anyone about."



Peer Support Groups & Befriending

Adults, children, and young people affected by imprisonment now have the option to engage with peer support groups or be matched with a volunteer befriender. These services are designed to help family members who are looking for 'light touch' support or are ready to move away from individual, person-centred support provided by our Regional Family Support



Participation

We are also finding new ways to link more families into important conversations so they can talk about things that matter most to them. Families' voices have the power to call for change and make a difference not only with us at Families Outside, but across the wider Criminal Justice landscape.

"Seeking change to the prison system on one's own can be daunting. Taking part in effecting change together is empowering."

Training & Awareness-Raising

Families Outside runs three training modules accredited from CPD UK, which continue to make a positive impact on key professionals, widening the range of support available to families:

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

"Very emotive and personal to me as I... grew up with both parents being in prison. I would like to research more into the support that is offered now. Looking forward to the next 2 sessions."

Changes in our staffing meant that delivery of this training was curtailed, but delivery of our wider awareness-raising work resumed its previous reach.

“Thank you @FamiliesOutside for a great training session this morning. Really useful to think about the impact upon families and real parallels with how families caught up in addiction are also forgotten about. I hope more people can access your training.”



National Conference 2022

Families Outside hosted a national conference at The Studio in Glasgow on 16th November 2022. We had 158 delegates join us on the day from a wide range of areas including the third sector, Scottish Prison Service, Scottish Government, local authorities, education, health, community justice, public bodies, and colleagues from the legal profession. People with lived experience of having a family member in prison were also in attendance.

Our focus for the conference was to highlight families who are affected by imprisonment and the costs they endure as a result. Our aim was to engage a wide audience to highlight these costs and pose the question of what they might be able to do to support in their own areas.

The conference received positive feedback, and on the day, participants were asked to ‘Tweet’ about what they plan to do to support families affected by imprisonment as a result of attending the conference:



Conference attendee - Nov 16

I'm going to organise a Families Outside bookshelf in @StrathEDU @UniStrathclyde Education Resource Centre.

Action from #FOConf22

Be the difference.

Practice Learning

Social work student placements continue to offer rich and diverse learning opportunities in the areas of family support, helpline, peer support groups, and research. Students have also appreciated the opportunity to learn about the interplay between practice and policy through their attendance at the Cross-Party Group for Women, Families, and Justice.

Once again, student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. One student said:

“I have very much enjoyed my placement with Families Outside. Everyone has been very kind and welcoming to me, making me feel comfortable and at ease. The experiences and opportunities Families Outside have given me have allowed me to gain knowledge in several areas. When I qualify, this will allow me to understand the various ways a family member can be impacted by imprisonment. By understanding the needs of the family members, I have supported, I will know if a family member would benefit from the advice and support that Families Outside can provide, and so I can signpost them to the organisation or put a referral in.”

Looking to strengthen our commitment to social work students, we are pleased to have provided placements to two new universities this year as well as continuing to engage with universities with whom we have established relationships.

Prison Visitors' Centre

Families Outside continues to provide the national coordinating role for Prison Visitors' Centres in Scotland, supporting 9 independent providers across 12 prisons.

Our Prison Visiting Lead has encouraged best practice across the prison estate through regular contact with providers locally as well as ensuring that the National Prison Visitors' Centre Steering Group is effective in meeting its agreed objectives. There has also been progress in developing a work plan for support for visitors to prisons that do not yet have a visitor centre service.

This year's National Prison Visitors' Centre Conference, "Just a Visit? Children and young people who visit a prison", took place online. We were delighted to welcome the Minister for Children and Young People, Clare Hughey, The Children's Commissioner, Bruce Adamson,

and the Scottish Prison Service, who spoke about the importance of the work of the Centres for children visiting a prison, as well as criminal defence lawyer Iain Smith and Kirsty Giles from the Violence Reduction Unit, who discussed trauma in the Justice system.



96 individuals

**from across the UK
attended the National
Prison Visitors' Centre
Conference online**

Influencing Change

Families Outside contributed to 33 consultations, requests for input, and research projects covering a wide and diverse number of requests. Significantly, this included completion of our own long-term research into the financial impact of imprisonment on families, funded by the abrdn Financial Fairness Trust, and continuation of research to support children and young people in care who have a brother or sister in prison.

Other input included submissions to Criminal Justice, Community Justice, Mental Health & Well-Being, Social Work, UNCRC, Health, SPS Family Strategy, Changes to the Parole Board (Scotland) Rules, and consultation on a number of other Bills relevant to the families we support. Further work included input to reviews, surveys, research workshops, and advisory groups at national and international levels. This included participation in the Scottish Government's Social Work Short-life working group on Impact on Children with Families in Custody; contribution to the Scottish Human Rights Commission's National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP); and ongoing work on implementation of the recommendations from the Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody.

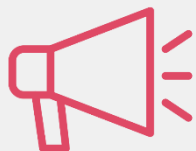
We are pleased to see the visible recognition of this work from key decision makers.

"It is my absolute commitment that choice and control, as well as compassion and transparency, will be woven into our justice system so as to better deliver for families.... I want to ensure that changes that are made to processes when someone dies in custody are meaningful, that they meet families' expectations, and that they radically improve the response to families when the death of a loved one occurs in prison.... I want to be clear that I regard families as our most important stakeholders, as key consultants as we progress with implementing the recommendations and indeed as co-designers of the new investigative process."

- Cabinet Secretary for Justice, 22 June 2022

"... letting somebody out of the prison environment should be done with as much planning and care as possible. The Families Outside written submission is particularly interesting in that respect. Ultimately, there is nothing worse than vulnerable people who have been disconnected from society for a period being turfed out of prison, not having anywhere to stay when they go back, and not having any way in which to access services. All that that is likely to achieve is to put their rehabilitation at risk, there will be a risk of further offending, and the cycle will begin again. It is really important that planning takes place, and there is a huge social benefit in that. The Bill's objectives in that respect are to be commended."

- Law Society of Scotland's oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee on the Bail and Release (Scotland) Bill, 18 January 2023



We also released **10 new publications**, 6 of which related to our **20-month project on the financial impact of imprisonment on families**. They also included a briefing paper on families' experiences of video calls to prisons; a **video celebrating 30 years of work at Families Outside**; and **a series of 12 short videos** with two young people from Scotland and the US comparing their experiences of growing up with a father in prison.

Global Reach

Families Outside has been an active member of Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) since 2010 and now hosts and chairs the International Coalition for Children with Incarcerated Parents (INCCIP), with over 800 participants worldwide. INCCIP, in turn, is a member of Child Rights Connect and co-chairs CRC's global working group on children with incarcerated parents.

Families Outside values the learning from such networks, both providing and benefitting from research and positive practice worldwide to support families affected by imprisonment more effectively.



Aims for 2023 – 2024

For the 2023-24 financial year, Families Outside commits to sustaining the high quality and evidence-based support we provide for families through direct support, direct input from families, training and awareness-raising, and development of policy and practice. Specifically, in 2023-24 we will:



Build our offering of support, particularly family to family support



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



Continue to change the narrative in Scotland around the stigma of a family member's imprisonment



Review and refresh our information and publications for families



Improve our training offer to lawyers and the judiciary, embedding an awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its implications in adult criminal courts



Complete our action research on maintaining relationships between brothers and sisters who are in care and in prison



Embed an awareness throughout practice and decision-making of the impact of imprisonment on the children and families left behind



Lead research to explore and develop evidence-based collaborative support between prisons and schools for children with a parent in prison



Promote a Scotland in which the rights of children and families affected by imprisonment are embedded and upheld, and the right supports are in place for them



Support incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scottish domestic law



Follow up the recommendations from our action research on the financial impact of imprisonment on families



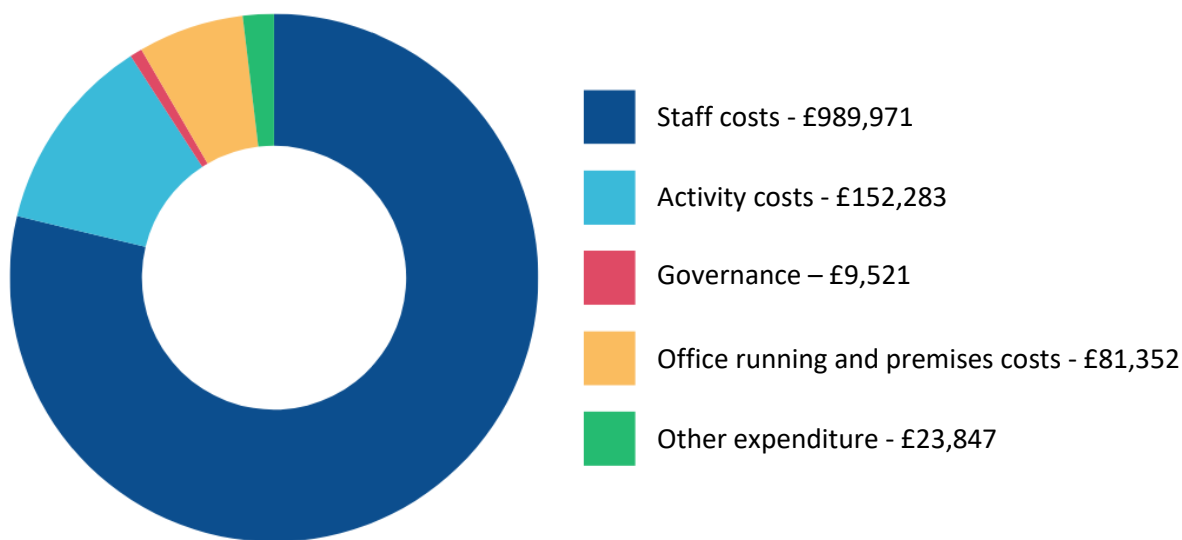
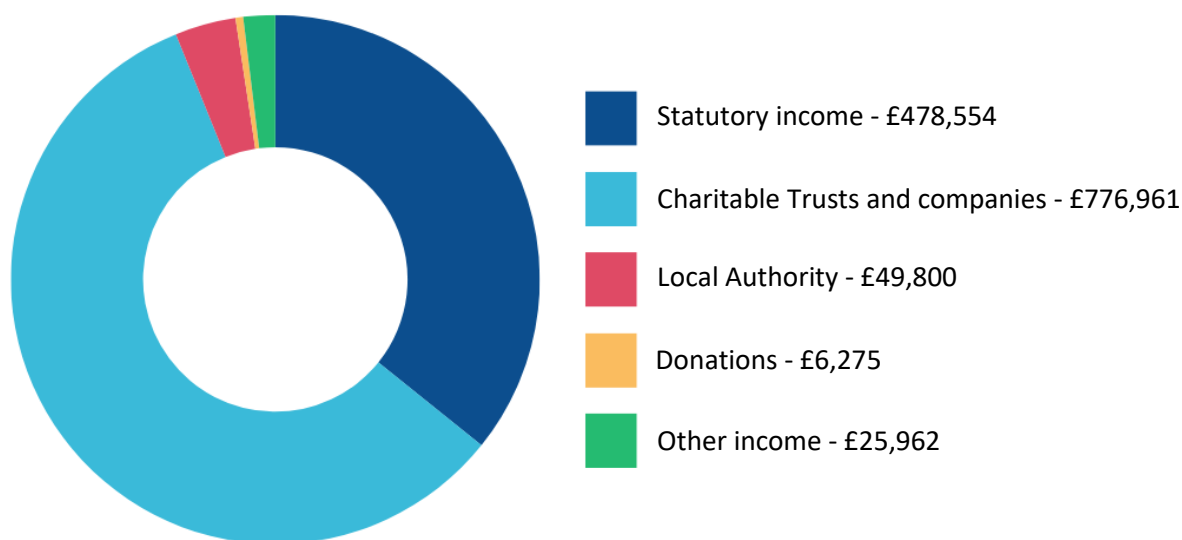
Continue support for the implementation of the recommendations from the Independent Review of the Response to Deaths in Prison Custody

We look forward to reporting on our progress.

Financial

Families Outside had another steady year in 2022-23, with our income in line with our expenditure. We have moved into 2022/2023 with nearly a full staff complement and a reasonably secure income base, though we are keeping a careful eye on the increased costs the current economy has created for our operation, for our staff team, and for the families we support.

We 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 such essential and extensive support to families affected by imprisonment in Scotland.



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

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