



‘Supporting those serving a silent sentence’

FFOPS Trustee Report 2023-2024

“As the Founder of FFOPS I cannot let such a remarkable Report go without adding my grateful thanks to the commitment , dedication and guidance for the staff, volunteers and all the custodial/statutory Agencies involved in showing support, passion and warmth towards Prisoners’ families and friends the minute our visitors steps foot into our cabin and also to the wider Welsh Prison continuing always to promote the Forgotten Victims.

It warms my heart with such pride to see FFOPS spreading throughout Wales how essential it is to be the voice for Prisoners Families and Friends endeavouring to break the cycle of reoffending and protecting our Communities.” - Beverley Poiner

FFOPS manage the booking in/waiting area (cabin) at the entrance to the prison. We are the first point of contact for all visitors, which means making the right first and lasting impression. Getting our families to feel they can confide in us and thereby trust us is paramount. Located at the prison enables us to know, understand and communicate how the prison works, answering queries, providing practical and emotional support, assisting with filling in application forms, assisted prison visits, financial information, and liaising with schools/social services/ solicitors/mental health services.

Many of the visitors have different needs, some visible, some not. Getting to know our families enables us to assess their needs and the needs of their loved ones, and to ensure that they are treated with both dignity and care. We can speak privately to visitors if they need that time. Working with the support of the probation sector in the prison has enabled FFOPS to be able to check with them if we have any service users that may need some extra support or information on the background of their loved ones needs and any concerns we have we can share with them.

It is our role to ensure that the prison booking team is aware of these needs prior to arrival to ensure that the visit is not impinged and the parent/carer does not suffer because of their disability, including people in wheelchairs and with mobility issues to have separate access. We have accompanied children with Autism and ADHD into visits and kept them occupied and involved so the rest of the family do not have their visit disrupted. We have an array of sensory toys, books, arts and crafts and activities in our cabin.

By engaging with the children on arrival and distracting them with toys, games and activities, we try to reduce the focus on the negatives. We aim to encourage regular visits, in order to maintain family bonds. We treat all visitors with the respect and dignity they deserve. All of these things make a huge difference to our visitors. We can arrange activities and outings for children to give their parents/grandparents a break, this is especially important when a member of the family needs constant attention, their siblings can feel marginalised and neglected so we try to arrange separate activities so everyone gets attention.

We believe that no child should suffer as a result of their parent's actions. We also know that the prison environment can be a scary one, and visiting for a child, can be overwhelming, nerve racking and intimidating. Our role is to reduce the impact that this has on the child or the parents, making the visit as relaxing as we possibly can. We do this by interacting, playing and talking to the children beforehand discussing their fears and worries and helping to explain the process.

Our team has committed themselves to training and courses to further understand things such as Mental health, Safeguarding, Suicide Prevention, Understanding self harm, Challenging behaviours, Working with victims of trauma, Additional learning needs, First aid and others.

By completing these training courses with agencies such as Papyrus, Womens Aid and St Johns Ambulance our team can offer the appropriate support and signposting if needed.

We have an excellent relationship with the prison, attending regular meetings and networking with other agencies where needed. We can reduce the number of queries the prison is dealing with by advising and consoling visitors who are distressed before they go into the visit. We are on hand to explain the routine and we can also walk them in through the search areas and then over into the visits centre to the PACT waiting area, so they have a friendly face with them. It is a priority to ensure children are made to feel welcome and that they are not frightened by the surroundings.

(Please see below feedback from HMP Swansea)

I have been working as a Visits Booking Clerk at HMP Swansea (MoJ) for nine years.

Visits Booking work closely with Carla to keep the avenues of contact between prisoners and their close friends & families open as best as possible. We keep FFOPS up-to-date with potentially challenging behaviours which may occur upon arrival, health issues which may require the kindness FFOPS offer arrivals and immediately phone through any cancellations, alterations to bookings or concerns that we have.

In turn, Carla and her team are always welcome to offering us help & assistance in our jobs. FFOPS make Visits Bookings job all the smoother through their professionalism and kind manner. They provide at times assistance the likes of which we would expect from anybody of Officer, Manager or Governor grade within the prison.

The support I personally have received from FFOPs is second to none. Carla and the team are approachable and happy to discuss new ideas that both the prison, families, prisoners and FFOPS have.

They are happy to spend time with me to discuss concerns raised by families to resolve these as soon as possible, ensuring the families feel they have a voice.

They continue to be a link between prisoners and their families ensuring that bonds and links can be maintained and developed during the custodial period.

The time they spend with the families of those in custody ensures we as an establishment show we want to support everyone involved during this difficult time.

Swansea Prison Library and FFOPs have created an excellent working partnership which is underpinned by the fact that Carla attends the fortnightly Wing Reps meeting along with our Library Orderly. This ensures that any collaborative work is evidenced to and supported by the Governors.

The Library creates and provides Gift Bags of Books for distribution to children visiting their Dads. We also provide magazines. FFOPs advertises children's events happening in Swansea Libraries and will focus on the Summer Reading Challenge during school holidays. Swansea Prison Library will also be running a Summer Reading Challenge for Dads, to run concurrently, to generate enthusiasm for reading and encourage family discussion about books.

When we held a talk on The History of Swansea Prison in April, Carla attended with a colleague and provided refreshments, for which we were extremely grateful.

FFOPS Swansea is the front of house contact point for families coming in to visit a loved one. FFOPS offer a warm, friendly welcome, they provide reassurance, support, planning, advice, and guidance, and they assist families in a way that ensures they feel relaxed, judgement free, and informed with all the information they need to have regular quality visits.

FFOPS also work closely with our staff to ensure smooth running of visits, they inform us of any issues families have in advance of their arrival so that we can prepare support or assistance within the establishment.

FFOPS support families within the establishment at meetings and events, and they also contribute funding to ensure the events are of the highest standard.

FFOPS are an integral part of our team. They contribute so much to ourselves and to our families, and the work they do here is second to none.

FFOPS are valued, respected and we and our families are very fortunate to have such strong, reliable, consistent support and friendship.

FFOPS have been an amazing support to me as a new member of the visits team. Carla has offered so much help and guidance, always taking time out to answer any questions I have.

The feedback I have received from families regarding the whole visits process has been nothing but positive, and with the FFOPS cabin being the first point of contact for visitors it is the friendly and supportive staff in FFOPs who provide families with the information to give them the confidence they need when coming into the establishment.

Carla consistently provides exceptional service by attentively listening to visitors, responding with patience, and resolving issues efficiently. Carla works closely with prison staff, including myself to put families at ease in what can be a daunting time.

Carla has attended prisoner forums over the last year or so whilst I have been in post here at HMP Swansea. Vital information is given to prisoners in these meetings which is then communicated to the wings. This is an important communication tool. The prisoners value her presence at these meetings, and they appreciate the information and support FFOPS provide their families. This has such a positive impact to the custody journey.

If Carla is unsure how to deal with a query, I receive emails and we communicate to make sure all parties are informed with the correct process or answer. So, nothing is left unanswered. Most prisoners and families just want an answer or an explanation.

The service FFOPS provides is truly exceptional and is valued. Previously, we had issues with 'clothing exchange' for prisoners where remand prisoners are allowed to have items brought in on a visit. After discovering some downfalls, Carla suggested that she would contribute and said she is happy to check apps in the cabin before visitors enter the gate.

By doing this it prevents any awkward situations and gives families notice if apps were signed off in time for the visit. This is just one of the extra measures of how FFOPS go above and beyond.

Thank you FFOPS for all the hard work you do for HMP Swansea.

G4S FEEDBACK

We have been working alongside FFOPS for many years and we are very grateful to collaborate. Carla and staff regularly attended Family Days at HMP Usk, Cardiff and Parc prison and are planning to attend the next Family Day at HMP Prescoed. In addition, the FFOPS team have supported the Schools Showcase at HMP Parc and HMP Cardiff prison. FFOPS do a number of interventions during these Family Days which supports a positive interaction between dads families and their children. Working together means that we can have a broader reach and also support families who transition from prison to prison as their loved one transitions to a new establishment. The transition can be a difficult time for families and is made easier with a clear pathway which has developed because of the positive relationship between FFOPS and the IW Family Teams.

Carla and her team from FFOPS have supported Invisible Wall Family Services at HMP Cardiff since we came into contract in 2022. Carla and her team have been instrumental in the delivery of our family days in which we hold at least ten a year. Carla engages with the families and children and also brings meaningful activities for the families to enjoy. As a service we find Carla's work invaluable as this offers families at HMP Cardiff holistic support with links to HMP Swansea for those in custody.

FFOPS have attended HMP Usks family days on several occasions. Carla has facilitated the engagement of the children with their fathers' utilising arts and crafts and access to activities. Her presence at the family day has enhanced the family friendly environment we strive to provide at HMP Usk. This facility has enabled the children to feel relaxed and enjoy the activities they engage in with their fathers. Carla is professional, reliable and a delightful addition to our family day team.

We have received funding from the following Organisations for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 :-

Allen Lane	£ 4,500.00
Austin Bailey (Vouchers)	£ 2,000.00
Donations	£ 160.00
Swansea University	£22,889.00
Tudor Trust (1)	£25,000.00
Tudor Trust (2)	£ 1,000.00
Waterloo	£13,500.00
Credits	£ 306.00
TOTAL	£48,755.00

The above Funding contributed to :-

**Staffing costs, including training
 Volunteer expenses (travel, training and subsistence)
 Telephone, internet/website and cabin running costs
 Insurance/audit fees
 Advertising and marketing
 Meeting expenses/travel/overnight stays/networking meetings
 Activities and equipment
 Family days/events
 Day out/Activity vouchers Christmas presents/vouchers/gift bags/seasonal gifts**

FFOPS is an organisation that understands what it is like to feel ostracised and lonely, to be the crutch that supports and the glue that helps to hold families together. Our aim is to do this pre, during and post sentencing and following the prisoners release continuing to maintain relationships to try and support wherever we possibly can. Prisoners are aware that in some cases, families could not survive without our support. In certain cases, for some, it is a harsh reality for prisoners to recognise that their actions have consequences that not only impacts on themselves.

In 2023/24 our levels of service users have been a lot higher than previous years. This will be a knock-on effect of the cost-of-living crisis and the rise of financial related crimes. FFOPS will need to make adaptations to some of their services to fit in with the current climate.

We have been able to work with other prisons by attending family days and events at other Prisons such as Usk, Cardiff and Parc. This has given FFOPS some great opportunities to meet other families and support them along their journeys.

By working collaboratively with other Prisons, we can make sure families have a point of contact and the correct information for their visits transition. For a lot of our families having been familiar with the process at Swansea the very thought of change to another prison can be really daunting and cause increased stress on top of what they are already going through. If families have any needs, we can speak to the Prison for them and make sure they know beforehand so at least some of the strain is taken off the families.

Attending these family days and events are important to the families and their journey through the justice system. We are so happy when we see familiar faces and they love to tell us all that they've been up to. Seeing these strengthening family bonds are what FFOPS service is all about.

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all our grant funders, partner/third sector organisations, HMP and G4S staff, workers, volunteers, and trustees, without whom our work would not be possible.

Thank you all for helping us make such an important difference to people's lives at a time when they need it the most.

South West Wales Families & Friends of Prisoners

Registered Charity Number 1054204

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Income	2023/24	2022/23	Expenditure	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£		£	£
Grants & Donations			Staff Employment Costs (incl. HMRC, Pensions, Redundancy)	32,513.85	30,706.77
Allen Lane Foundation	4,500.00	4,500.00	Staff Training	1,237.44	2,594.80
Austin Bailey	2,000.00		Volunteer Travel, Training & Subsistence	317.98	1,898.38
Waterloo Foundation	13,500.00		Printing & Stationery		622.23
National Lottery - Awards for All			Telephone, Internet & Website	1,306.23	1,763.98
National Lottery - Community Fund		204.00	Insurances	404.68	363.70
Tudor Trust (1)	25,000.00	25,000.00	Postage & General Office Costs	263.90	24.05
Tudor Trust (2)	1,000.00	2,000.00	Bank Charges	62.96	61.68
Swansea University	2,403.00	2,000.00	Cleaning		15.10
Other Income			Financial Admin / Independent Examination	1,415.00	1,025.00
Donations	1,660.00	1,515.00	Equipment - Play Materials, Educational Toys & Equipment	426.38	550.24
Bank Interest	430.93	111.35	Meetings & Room hire	1,986.56	428.12
			Advertising & Publicity	475.66	-
			Events	1,432.09	1,333.88
			IT Software		419.92
			Family Day	13,368.65	2,149.07
Deficit of Income	4,717.45	8,626.57	Surplus of Income over Expenditure	-	
	55,211.38	43,956.92		55,211.38	43,956.92

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
4		
Fixed Assets at cost	-	-
Current Assets		
Bank	15,818.07	22,010.65
Cash in hand	5.91	30.78
Debtors		
	15,823.98	22,041.43
Current Liabilities		
Loans (L. Byrne & B. Poiner)	-	1,500.00
Accountancy / Independent Examination	200.00	200.00
	200.00	1,700.00
Net Assets	15,623.98	20,341.43
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Accumulated funds b/f	20,341.43	28,968.00
Surplus or Deficit for the year	- 4,717.45	- 8,626.57
Total funds this year	15,623.98	20,341.43
	1,094.57	374.60

These assets at bank/cash are "unrestricted"

These accounts have been prepared based on the records provided to show the Charity's position as at 31 March 2024.

*SA Coates***Sheralee Coates**

Chartered Accountant (South Africa)

No. 03081932



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
South West Wales Families & Friends of Prisoners

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1054204

Set out on pages

(set out on the 48 pages after the third page of this IER)

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

SA Coates

Date:

6 August 2024

Name:

Sheralee Ann Coates

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Chartered Accountant (South Africa)

Address:

3 Salisbury Drive, Rochdale, OL11 2WF

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Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

It should be noted that there is some liquidity risk, as mentioned in note 25 of the accounts, which is mainly due to grant funded projects continuing to run while awaiting further funding instalments and is exacerbated by a lack of unrestricted income which would help act as a cushion against these effects.

The fact that the vast majority of the organisation's income is grant funded with restrictions means that flexibility is very limited.