



‘Supporting those serving a silent sentence’

FFOPS Trustee Report 2024-2025

“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.

What we do-

Provide a non-judgmental, dignified and friendly approach to visitors

Toys, arts and crafts, sensory toys and reading materials are available to all - making the waiting time less boring

Signposting and referral services available

Work closely with other charities and third parties to ensure all visitors are given the opportunity to access support

Provide foodbank and hygiene bank vouchers for essential items

Attend other Prisons in Wales to be a part of the family days, events and community trips

Provide all visitors with information on services in other Prison if their loved one is transferred so they have knowledge beforehand

Make the visiting surroundings pleasant with dedicated staff and volunteers.

Listen to children's views, ask them what they think we could do to improve their experience.

Remember that Child Protection and safeguarding is paramount

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

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.

Anything FFOPS can do to contribute to making contact with a prisoner relative

easier for children and young people, will contribute to their wellbeing and may reduce the risk of offending later in life. The Children Act 1989 gives children the right to visit their parent in prison if it is in the child's best interests.

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.

Feedback

The Visits Booking Team works 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 behaviors 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.

(Visits Department)

As the current head of operations, 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 shows we want to support everyone involved during this difficult time.

(Operations Department)

I have been liaising with FFOPS with several cases and the support has been amazing from both a partnership perspective and for the sake of the men I supervised in custody and their families. I have attached a copy of the Performance and Recognition referral I made as a result of the support offered by Carla and the team.

Person A– supporting his disabled mother with the use of Purple video visits.

Person B – supporting his disabled and elderly mother with her adjustments to him being in prison and the impact that this has had on her at home. Also supported his mother in attending prison visits and attending the 12 Steps graduation.

Person C – this was a very complex case, where there was a fabricated pregnancy and Carla and the team knew the woman from attending visits and were able to offer vital information to myself, social services, and police to support Person C through this process.

Domestic Violence cases – there have been several instances where a victim of DV has been visiting the prison and Carla has liaised accordingly with myself and the probation team in custody and the community.

(Probation)

During my time as a prison based Probation Officer, I have had limited contact with the Family and Friends of Prisoners department however I would like to highlight one example of their excellent work.

The family of one of our prisoners was regularly visiting him. A mother with complex health issues, who was a parent of two very young children, one of whom was autistic. A referral to Childrens Services had been made by me, as there were ongoing child safeguarding concerns that requested the intervention of the local authority. Carla from FFOPS was aware that I was working with the prisoner, and she arranged a meeting with me to share her own observations of this family with me. These observations contributed greatly to the overall picture we then had about the impact the parents' behaviours was having on the development of the children. Carla and I subsequently kept in touch to allow her to share updates, which in turn helped to safeguard the children.

This is just one example of the excellent work of FFOPS and its contribution to the safety of the families it supports.

(Probation)

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.

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.

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.

(Reducing Reoffending lead)

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.

Family Feedback

Hi, I am the mother-in-law of a prisoner who is at Swansea prison on remand, I bring my daughter back and through and when I'm not visiting, I sit in the hub run my FFOPS. They are friendly, understanding and nothing is too much for them. They sit and listen to us all, Carla is friendly and understanding all the staff are friendly and understanding all the staff and easy to talk to.

My daughter feels safe when she is at the cabin, and I love to sit and talk to the cabin, and I love to sit and talk to the staff.

I will pop in to see them when my son in law is released, I will never forget all the chats and support they gave my daughter and myself while visiting Swansea prison.

I love coming to FFOPS, I love the staff, they are easy to talk, they understand how I feel while I wait to go over to see my fiancé.

Carla and all the other staff understand my disabilities, I always turn up early so I can sit and talk to whoever is in the cabin. The team are brilliant and understanding. I will miss all the staff at FFOPS when my fiancé is released.

I've been coming back and forth to the prison since end of January 2025 with the two kids more or less every day and I can't fault the staff who are there, especially Carla! She is amazing with the kids and makes everyone feel so welcome in there and just makes coming into the booking in the cabin enjoyable! My eldest child who's 3 loves pretending to make her a cup of tea.

I just want to say a huge thank you!

I would like to share some feedback in regard to FFOPS at Swansea prison. Finding myself in an unfamiliar situation and with high anxiety and being very upset with the circumstances I have to say the FFOPS team were so friendly and welcoming and helped provide as much information how it works also. This then helps to have a form of knowledge of what would happen.

The team were always so kind and welcoming. Recognising me every time and relaxing me with conversation, and my stepchildren and mother-in-law also who were all extremely nervous and anxious the same as myself.

Thank you for reading this and I appreciate the work the team do they are a great service to help the families and support for those who are finding this process difficult.

We have received funding from the following Organisations for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 :-

Austin Bailey	£2,750.00
Donations	£60.00
Swan Uni	£2,520.00
TudorTrust (1)	£25,000.00
Tudor Trust (2)	£1,000.00
TOTAL	£31,330.00

The above funding contributed to :-

Staffing costs

Volunteer expenses (travel, training and subsistence)

Telephone, internet/website and cabin running costs
bags/seasonal gifts

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

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.

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.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT					
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025					
	2024/25	2023/24	Expenditure	2024/25	2023/24
	£	£		£	£
Income					
Grants & Donations			Staff employment costs	29,105.97	32,513.85
Allen Lane Foundation	-	4,500.00	Staff training		1,237.44
Austin Bailey	2,750.00	2,000.00	Volunteer travel, training & subsistence	375.80	317.98
Waterloo Foundation	-	13,500.00	Telephone, internet & website	922.80	1,306.23
Tudor Trust (1)	25,000.00	25,000.00	Insurances	416.45	404.68
Tudor Trust (2)	1,000.00	1,000.00	Postage & General office costs	39.85	263.90
Swansea University	2,520.00	2,403.00	Bank charges	64.89	62.96
			Financial admin/indepenent examination	2,200.00	1,415.00
Other income			Equipment - play materials, educational toys	7.29	426.38
Donations	60.00	1,660.00	Meetings & room hire	904.12	1,986.56
Bank interest	321.02	430.93	Advertising & publicity	332.56	475.66
			Events		1,432.09
			Family day	7,191.18	13,368.65
Deficit of Income	9,909.89	4,717.45			
	<u>41,560.91</u>	<u>55,211.38</u>		<u>41,560.91</u>	<u>55,211.38</u>
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2025					
	2024/25	2023/24			
	£	£			
Current assets					
Bank	7,149.10	15,818.07			
Cash in hand	164.99	5.91			
Debtors					
	<u>7,314.09</u>	<u>15,823.98</u>			
Current liabilities					
Accountancy/Independent Examination	- 1,600.00	- 200.00			
	<u>- 1,600.00</u>	<u>- 200.00</u>			
Net Assets	<u>5,714.09</u>	<u>15,623.98</u>			
<i>Represented by:</i>					
Accumulated funds b/f	15,623.98	20,341.43			
Surplus / deficit for the year	- 9,909.89	- 4,717.45			
Total funds this year	<u>5,714.09</u>	<u>15,623.98</u>			
	1,411.00	1,094.57	"unrestricted" portion of assets at bank/cash		

These accounts have been prepared based on the records provided to show the Charity's position as at 31 March 2025.

Nicholas Bassett
Harris Bassett Limited
Swansea