



Supporting Families and Friends of Prisoners

Action
For
Families
Enduring
Criminal
Trauma



Registered charity no. 1097087

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AFFECT NEWS

Sharing news and support for families



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0300 365 3651

Chair's Report

Dear Ones

Brrr. The weather is changing; storms, strong winds and much rain. The heating is on, and woollies and blankets being well-used. Winter must be here!

In AFFECT, we have been busy, and have recruited 2 new Telephone Support Workers (welcome, Shamim and Rob). They have been, or are, about to have allocated a client/user, to give such crucial support to someone suffering the trauma of a loved one in prison. Many of us can remember that awful time, with feelings of fear, anger, shame and guilt. For many, it feels like a bereavement. All our 13 TSWs do a tremendous job, listening, caring and walking beside the people using our services.

There have been a number of recent reports into the state of our prisons. I include reference to several in this Newsletter, with key findings. The overall picture is grim; a picture of over-crowding, violence, insufficient and inexperienced staff, and inadequacy. Let us hope that the newly appointed Justice Minister, Alex Chalke, gets a grip on this, and makes significant improvements. The risk is that in the run-up to a General Election, many more promises will be made than can be delivered. Or am I just an old cynic?

On a positive note, the Trust Board and Telephone Support Workers recent 'Get-Together', held recently at the House of Bethany, was a lovely face-to-face meet-up. Some TSWs we met for the first time, as they had been recruited via Zoom. We had a guest speaker, Martin Handy, who spoke about integrating counselling skills to become better helpers. Lunch was provided by the House of Bethany- it was varied, and sumptuous- A sign of the times is the increasing emphasis on plant-based and vegetarian diets- thank-you, Mother Mary Joy.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will see details of our next AGM. Please come if you can; it would be great to see you.

Happy Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Love, Carol (Chair)

Update on Prisons

There have been a number of reports recently on the terrible state of our prisons:

Chief of Governors' Body

Andree Albutt

The President of the Prison Governors' Association has described the Prison service in England and Wales as "bust" and reduced to "lunacy" prioritising the need for spaces over the safety of people living and working in jails.

The prison population rose to 88,000 in October 2023, an increase of over 6,500 in a year. She described the numbers as "mind-boggling".

Chief Inspector of Prisons Independent Report 26/9/2023

The statement from Charlie Taylor states that 1 in 10 prisons in England and Wales are barely fit for purpose and should be shut down. 14 Victorian era jails are badly designed, over-crowded and ill-equipped. They include Wandsworth, Pentonville, Liverpool, Leicester, Lewes, Exeter, Bristol, and Leeds.

Thousands of prisoners are being infected in verminous buildings, with too few staff and inadequate facilities for re-training and education.

The Prison Officers' Association

Warns that organised crime gangs are 'sending recruits to train as Prison Officers, with the sole purpose of smuggling drugs and phones into jails. The online job interviews contribute to hiring the wrong people.

Home Detention Curfew will be available to more prisoners 07/11/23

The Home Detention Curfew (HDC) programme, which is presently only available to prisoner's serving terms of less than four years, will now also be eligible for longer fixed-term sentences. The king delivered this commitment in his speech.

Research:

AFFECT has been asked by Natalie Tambini, a researcher, to participate in a podcast project at Hearst UK.

The project involves talking to mums whose adult children have been sentenced to life for murder. The intention of the podcast is to help listeners understand the practical and emotional impact; an area often overlooked by the media.

They would pay a fee for participation.

If interested, email Natalie.Tambini@hearst.co.uk"

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 2nd December 2023 at 10am

to be held at House of Bethany, 7 Nelson Road Southsea PO5 2AR

[Next Group Gathering](#)

Will be on Saturday 2nd December at 1pm

please contact us for details if you would like to attend

affect01@hotmail.com 0300 365 3651

Today's messages

'Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present.'

Bil Keane

Data Protection

AFPECT keeps very limited information on our members, namely name, email, and telephone details. If you would like to be removed from our records, please email affect01@hotmail.com or ring Carol on 07833 458415

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