



family newsletter

Prisoners Abroad is the only charity providing practical support and campaigning for the welfare of Britons imprisoned abroad.

Welcome...

to the summer issue of the re-launched family newsletter.

The newsletter will include articles and special features which we hope will be of interest to you. We are also keen to receive letters and contributions from you. If you have any thoughts, issues or opinions that you would like to share with other readers, please drop me a line.

This issue includes:

- Information about how we can help you, including information about the family days to be held later in the year
- Contact details of your caseworker
- A special feature on Counselling
- Information about prisoner family support groups throughout the UK

We plan to send out two family newsletters a year – the next one will be at the end of the year.

I hope you enjoy this issue and find it interesting and informative. If you have any comments about this issue or suggestions for articles for future issues we would be very happy to hear from you.

Alan Hooker

Editor

Tel 020 7561 6862



“This situation has created an inner pain like no other. We talk about my daughter all the time, her children miss her a great deal, we all do. Some days are better than others – we eat, sleep and function. There are the days I find it hard to eat, unsure if my child is eating and times sleep is difficult. From the day my daughter was sentenced I have been filled with very mixed feelings, much sadness – ‘she has been sentenced’ then relief – ‘being realistic – what else did I expect’. Then confusion – how do you prepare for her coming home? This has to be a life-changing experience that could destroy my child emotionally. What can I do to help her?... My daughter’s experience is personal to her, she is an individual and although there may be similarities to others we cannot predict or truly know what to expect... My family have all been affected by this experience – it is an experience like no other.”

AMW

Hearing about the arrest and imprisonment of your family member or friend abroad may have been an extremely traumatic experience.

- **They may be detained in a country where English is not spoken**
- **The legal and prison systems may be different from what we are used to**
- **Arranging a visit may be extremely difficult and very expensive**
- **You may have to deal with a number of things which you have never had to deal with before**

Prisoners Abroad is here to support you through difficult times...



National and local support groups

As a relative or friend of someone in prison abroad, coping with the distress can be very difficult without support. All these groups are here to help, and happy to receive your call.

HOPE

☎ Glasgow: 0141 552 0229

☎ Glasgow: 0141 876 1846

Assist families in finding employment and support prisoners on their release.

Prisoners Families Information Line (Scotland)

☎ Freephone: 0500 839383

Information and support for prisoners families and friends in Scotland.

PACT (Prisoners Advice and Care Trust)

☎ Freephone: 0800 085 3021

Provides support to prisoners' families all over the UK. Have a drop-in centre in North London for families to meet.

NEPACS (North East Prison After Care Society)

☎ 0191 386 5699

Supports prisoners, ex-offenders and families in Durham, Cleveland, Northumberland, North Yorkshire and Tyne & Wear.

POPS (Partners of Prisoners' Support Groups) Manchester

☎ 0161 277 9066

Benefit advice and telephone support for families of prisoners.

FFOPS (Family and Friends of Prisoners)

☎ 01792 458645

Offers information, practical and emotional support to family and friends of prisoners in Wales.

CONTACT

☎ 01606 47107

Advice, info and support for prisoners families in Cheshire. Drop-in centre, telephone help-line and drugs support worker.

Prisoners' Families and Friends Service

☎ 0808 808 3444

Advice, information and support to any relative or friend of a prisoner.

Ormiston Children & Families Trust

☎ 01473 724 517

Support for young people and families in East Anglia.

S.H.A.R.P

☎ 01743 245 365

www.S-H-A-R-P.org.uk

Support, help and advice for prisoners families or friends, anywhere in the UK.

OUTMATES

☎ 020 8665 9562

Support for families, partners and friends of prisoners. Telephone counselling, practical help and home visits.

Runs **HARP** info/advice line for any prisoners' families in the UK.

☎ Freephone 0800 389 3003

www.harinfo.org.uk



How we can help...

Family Days

We are very pleased to take this opportunity to invite you to one of our family days later in the year.

Some of you may have attended one of our previous family days. They are open to all relatives and friends of the prisoners that we are in contact with.

The family days will give you a chance to ...

- Meet Prisoners Abroad staff
- Meet your caseworker and ask any questions or raise issues you want to talk about.
- Talk with other families who are in a similar situation.

Dates and venues

London – Thursday 17th October 2002

VENUE - (to be confirmed)

Manchester – Wednesday 20th November 2002

VENUE - (to be confirmed)

If you would like to come to either of the days, please fill in the enclosed slip in this newsletter, and sent it back to us.

If you would like further information about the family days, please call Alan Hooker on 020 7561 6862 or contact your caseworker.



Telephone linking

We can try to put you in touch with other families who have a friend or relative in the same prison or country to provide mutual support. Please contact your caseworker for more details

An information line for families

We plan to install a new telephone line later in the year so that you can phone us at a much cheaper rate than a normal phone call. Please see the next family newsletter for more details

Information leaflets

We have a range of information leaflets, specifically produced to provide information for you

- What about me – helping you cope
- What about the children – helping children cope
 - What financial help is there – help with dealing with financial difficulties
 - Welcome home – preparing for release and return of your friend or relative
 - Visiting for the first time – helping you to prepare for a first prison visit
 - Information for families on media involvement – some advice and help if you have been approached or are considering talking to the media



How to contact us...

Prisoners Abroad has been helping families of British prisoners for nearly 25 years. We are committed to providing you with advice, information and support, and improving our services to you. We aim to provide a personal, friendly and confidential service.

Your caseworker

Your caseworker is available to help you with the issues that arise during your relative/friend's imprisonment abroad. They can provide information on the prison and criminal justice system of the country in which your friend or relative is detained. If you have specific requests for information, your caseworker will try and find the information you need.

Here is a list of all their contact details and the different geographical areas that they have responsibility for.

They will be happy to hear from you.

France

Alan Hooker

☎ 020 7561 6862

alan@prisonersabroad.org.uk

Spain, South America, Cuba

Eleanor Openshaw

☎ 020 7561 6863

eleanor@prisonersabroad.org.uk

Asia, Caribbean, Middle East

Theo Cresser

☎ 020 7561 6864

theo@prisonersabroad.org.uk

Rest of Europe, Africa

Claus Kirschner

☎ 020 7561 6865

claus@prisonersabroad.org.uk

USA, New Zealand, Australia

Kate O'Reilly

☎ 020 7561 6866

kate@prisonersabroad.org.uk



We also provide assistance to families preparing for the release and return of their relative or friend from prison abroad. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please get in touch with your caseworker.

Special Feature - Counselling

Sometimes a specific issue or difficult feelings need specialist help. It can be helpful to talk this through with someone who is not involved. Counselling provides a confidential setting where you can talk freely. Counselling helps you to see difficulties from a different perspective and to find solutions or ways forward. One counselling session can be enough for some individuals, but more often a few sessions of an hour a week or fortnight are needed.

How to find a counsellor

Counselling and psychotherapy are available within the NHS. Many GPs have a counsellor or psychotherapist attached to the practice who they can refer an individual to upon request. However, resources are limited and there are usually long waiting lists.

The Counselling and Psychotherapy Resources Directory contains all private registered counsellors, and counselling organisations in all local regions of the UK.



We have a copy, so let us know if you would like information from it. Some of the private counselling sessions are expensive, but counsellors with cheaper fees are included.

Other organisations who can help

'Counselling' is a charity providing information on counselling services, and free face-to-face counselling in all regions of the UK. This service is only for individuals who receive Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance.

www.counsellingcharity.freeserve.co.uk

email: info@counselling.ltd.uk

Mind are the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. There are 220 local Mind associations.

Tel: 020 8519 2122 email: contact@mind.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk