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**INTRODUCTION**

HMP Lewes will strive to support prisoners develop positive and meaningful relationships with their families or significant others.

We recognise that positive relationships with their families and significant others are an integral part of helping prisoner address their offending behaviour and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational crime.

**The Family and Significant Others (FaSO) Committee will be at the forefront of our commitment to support the outcomes of the Lord Farmers Report.**

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| FaSO LEAD Head of Reducing Reoffending | Governor S. Taylor |
| FaSO Champion Custodial Manager Activities Point of Contact for day-to-day management of FaSO strategy  | Custodial Manger B. Page  |
| PACT – Regional Family Service Manager  | Emma Harvey |
| Head of Reducing Reoffending  | Governor S. Taylor |
| Head of Safety | Governor A. Popplestone |
| Probation -Through the Gate Manager | Sharon Coleman |
| Head of Chaplaincy | Chris Rooke |
| Head of Offender Management Unit | Governor P. Baker |
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**Lord Farmer Report**

The importance of strengthening Prisoners’ family ties to prevent re-offending and reduce intergenerational crime, in partnership with the membership charity Clinks, they were commissioned by the Government to investigate how connecting those in prison with their families can improve offender wellbeing, assist in keeping the public safe and reduce reoffending.



Lord Farmer’s report gave nineteen recommendations that put family and significant others at the heart of prison reform, a copy is available both in the Visitors’ Centre and in the library here at HMP Lewes.

Lord Farmer spoke of a ‘local family offer’ recommending all establishments deliver and develop provision in the following areas and that these are reflected in their strategy, and action plan. At a minimum the offer should include:

* + Visitors’ Centre/Visitor Reception Services
	+ Staffing structure - to ensure family work is an operational priority.
	+ Extended visits – to enable supportive relationships to flourish.
	+ Family learning – to equip individuals to maintain and improve relationships.
	+ Gateway communication system – to demonstrate how the establishment have responsive communication systems in place for families.

**Family should be the ‘golden thread’ running through the processes of all prisons.**



**Definition of** **‘Family’**

When we speak about families throughout this document, we are referring to a blood relative, legal, or significant person that a prisoner identifies as their next of kin and for care-leavers this may be someone that provides a statutory service. Many of those in custody will have experienced a non-traditional upbringing, with a range of adults having cared for them. It is important to accommodate all ‘family’ arrangements where they provide a constructive and supportive relationship for the prisoner and their family.

A research project looking at emotional resilience and positive family relationships significantly predicted that those with close and positive family ties had less difficulty with accommodation, alcohol and drugs, better family relationships after release.

**OUR VISION**

We are committed to transforming prisons into places of safety and reform and we recognise the need to provide those in our care with stable environments, as well as opportunities to change their behaviour and turn away from a life of crime. Relationships with families and significant others can play a key role in this. Our vision is that the prisoners of Lewes will maintain good relationships and re-establish ties with their family and friends in an environment that is safe and decent. By placing ‘family’ at the core of our business we can achieve Lord Farmer’s objectives.

**DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

HMP Lewes is committed to the principle that all our staff and prisoners are entitled to be treated with respect and fairness which is absent of any form of discrimination in all aspects of service provision and access to interventions.

We work alongside our equalities team to ensure that provision of and access to our services is fair and equal and that we do not discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of [age](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#age), [disability](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#disability), [gender reassignment](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#reassignment), [marriage and civil partnership](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#marriage), [pregnancy and maternity](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#pregmat), [race](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#race), [religion or belief](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#rob), [sex](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#sex) or [sexual orientation](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics#lgb).

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

To strengthen family ties to prevent reoffending, reduce intergenerational crime and support a safe and stable environment where reform can take place.

Our Family and Significant Others Strategy and model is built upon official research and findings. We will ensure that we keep abreast of new evidence and national, regional, and local data sources to tailor our delivery of family services and ensure its effectiveness.

We need to understand of the needs of our population, and we will achieve this through the data provided by the annual establishment Needs Analysis and the MPQL and information gathering exercises from which we can derive key themes. These exercises will include visitor surveys, forums with the families and/or significant others, and forums with prisoners.

**OUR STRATEGY WILL PROVIDE**



* Staffing Structure - Partnership Working
* Visitors’ Centre - meet and greet – support & advice.
* Extended Visits, Family Learning and 1:1 Support
* Early Days in Custody
* Safeguarding
* Equal Access
* Support for Prisoners not Receiving Visits
* ‘Gateway’ Communication System
* Training for our staff to understand the work and commitment of the FaSO.

**PARTNERSHIP WORKING**



Delivering effective family support cannot be achieved in isolation and as such we are committed to working in partnership with local and national stakeholders.

Our prison wide approach to the delivery of family services is overseen by our Family Services Committee which includes PACT, Chaplaincy, Safer Custody, Substance Misuse, Offender Management, Probation and Resettlement Services.

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PACT work is integrated into the prison and prisoners are made aware of their services in Reception, the First Night Centre and during induction. Services are wide ranging and are detailed within this strategy.

Services are publicised on the wings, through social media and the prison web page where family and significant others can reach the team.

 

Prison Family Support is another family service that work with our prisoners, supporting them and their FaSO alongside PACT.

**CHAPLAINCY**

A member of the Chaplaincy team meets all new prisoners. The department is a multi- faith team. They will take note of their religion and provide any faith-based material if requested. Prisoners who reside in the CSU and HCC will receive daily visits. The prisoners can also receive support prior to release and on request for pastoral care and faith support. The chaplaincy can provide Prison Visitors to those who do not receive any social visits. Chaplains are regularly contacted by family members over a variety of family issues including the death and serious illness of family members and have a responsibility to formally confirm this information where required to facilitate applications to attend funerals or visits to critically ill relatives.

Following a Death in Custody, Chaplaincy are available to attend visits to family alongside the FLO, provide support to these families and to help with subsequent family visits to the establishment and funeral/memorial arrangements. Chaplains are also regularly contacted by family who have concerns and/or requests for further details re their relatives in custody. Chaplains respond to these queries in accordance with prison policy and follow up concerns raised by pastoral visits and referrals to Safer Custody and other departments as appropriate. The Chaplaincy attend strategic meetings in support of prisoners and their families.

Each November, Chaplaincy offer the Angel Tree Scheme to prisoners. Prisoners due to be in custody over Christmas can apply to have Christmas presents sent free to their children subject to contact being permitted. A similar scheme is offered to allow YOIs to send their mother or significant adult female a card and small gift on Mother’s Day.

**FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER**

A Family Liaison Officer is appointed by the Governor to offer support and respond to the needs of a family who have a family member in prison who is seriously / terminally ill or have passed away. The Family Liaison Officer is a member of Prison Staff who has been trained to work with the family.

The Family Liaison Officer represents the main point of contact between the family and the prison, they are able offer support, practical help and advice, they are not a counsellor, but they are equipped with information about organisations that can help.

**SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES**

Substance misuse can have a significant negative impact on children and their own outcomes and can place an enormous strain on families. At times substance misuse Service clients require additional support regarding a concerned significant other (CSO) in relation to their addiction. We will work closely with our substance misuse Family Worker to build family support when relationships can safely be formed including signposting and referral to partner agencies for family members who require support. Through cross-functional working we will strive to include family and significant others to positively influence individuals to address their substance dependence by providing emotional support, motivation, and practical help to sustain recovery. Lord Farmer’s review of the importance of prisoners’ family ties highlighted links between family relationships and the use of illicit drugs, and we are taking forward the recommendations of that review.

The Substance Misuse Team work closely with our Security and Safety departments to reduce supply, reduce demand and build recovery. Please refer to the Substance Misuse Strategy for full details on our provision of services under this pathway.

**SAFER CUSTODY**

All departments under Family Services work collaboratively with Safer Custody, sharing information to support prisoners whose family relationships may be impacting on their mental and/or emotional wellbeing. This will include input into ACCT and Care Plans where appropriate.

**OMU / KEYWORKER**

Provided there is no risk to victim or any court orders preventing contact, the development of family relationships will be a key element of sentence planning. When relationship issues are identified or arise support will be offered via the POM and keyworker to improve relationships with family members. Relevant signposting and referrals to appropriate services within the prison and in the community will be made.

**PARTNERS PRE-RELEASE PANEL**

A multi-disciplinary group meets monthly to develop a resettlement plan for prisoners with 12 weeks or less to serve. Where there is evidence of poor or broken family relationships the group will signpost to appropriate services that can offer mentoring support in the community. We have developed a directory of support and multiple partnerships with community providers to create bespoke exit plans for our prisoners to help them settle back in the community and ensure there is continuity of care.

**VISITORS’ CENTRE**



The Visitors’ Centre here at HMP Lewes is currently undergoing a renovation project. The new centre will be open early 2024. The new centre will have a seating area for you to wait until your visit. It will also have a small indoor and outdoor play area, toilets and a basic baby changing facility. The visitors’ area will cater for the needs of children and provides a warm, welcoming, and safe environment for families and loved ones when visiting prisoners of HMP Lewes.

The Visitors’ Centre will be welcoming affording all visitors the chance to sit, to use the facilities and find out information about the prison regime and gives children the chance to play and relax before their visit. Volunteers offer refreshments, advice and emotional support to families and can make referrals to other departments. HHMP Lewes will actively encourage the prisoners to maintain outside contacts which best promote the interests of their family and rehabilitation.

We recognise that there can be difficulties when visiting a prison, with visiting often involving a great deal of time, effort, and expense. Visiting can be an emotional experience, and can be particularly difficult for children, with the necessary processes and rules often being confusing to them. This is compounded by long journeys, sometimes on public transport, that interrupt dinner and bedtime routines; this can leave children tired, irritable and sometimes confused, which can impact on their performance at school the next day.

The Visitors’ Centre will be managed and operated by PACT and is open at least an hour and a half before visits and, where possible, after visits. In doing so families can collect their thoughts and recover after travelling prior to the visit and also ‘decompress’ before facing the outside world again. Provision will include the following:

* Facilities for children to play whilst visiting.
* A positive and safe experience
* Visitors receive understandable basic information through a variety of media on support services for families and signposting to specialist services.
* All visitors have an opportunity to speak to a member of staff to share their concerns or discuss their family member.
* Accurate information about the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme (APVU) and establishment visiting arrangements is accessible to visitors.
* Updated information about the Prison Video facility is available along with rules and requirements of how to send property into the prison.

**Visiting Offer**

Social Face to face Visits

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| --- | --- |
| Monday | 14:00 - 15:30 |
| Tuesday | 14:00 - 15:30 |
| Wednesday | Currently No Visits |
| Thursday | 14:00 - 15:30 |
| Friday | Currently No Visits |
| Saturday | 14:00 - 15:30 |
| Sunday | 14:00 - 15:30 |

To book a face-to-face visit, prisoners will need to ensure visitors are on their ‘Approved visitors’ list and complete a visit booking app. The visits booking team will phone the visitor to confirm a convenient day for the visit.

**VIDEO VISITS**

The video visits are facilitated by ‘Prison Video’. The prisoner needs to add their visitor to their approved visitor list and visitors download the ‘Prison Video’ app on their phone or device. Once visitors have cleared security through the app and added the prisoner’s name and prison number, video visits can be booked through the app. The visits booking team confirm that the slot is available, and confirmation is sent through the app.

Phone Hub Video Calls - Each slot is for 30 minutes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Monday | 14:15 & 15:00 |
| Tuesday | 14:15 & 15:00 |
| Wednesday | Currently No Visits |
| Thursday | 14:15 & 15:00 |
| Friday | Currently No Visits |
| Saturday | 14:15 & 15:00 |
| Sunday | 14:15 & 15:00 |

**EXTENDED VISITS, FAMILY LEARNING & 1:1 SUPPORT**

HMP Lewes recognises the benefits of access to Family visits and family learning that meets the needs of the whole prison population. The benefits of this do not stop at the prisoners but includes their families and significant others. In addition to 1:1 support PACT offers family days and a number of enhanced events to overlap our standard visits and also an environment in which families can learn together. They will endeavour to sequence family days for school aged children within holidays to support their involvement and to prevent them being stigmatised by their absence from school. Much of the offer has been influenced from feedback given to us by families. Family days and other planned activities help to improve positive relationships between the prisoners and their children or other family members. Regular and good quality contact time between an offending parent and their children, may prevent them from reoffending, as the responsibility and impact of separation may be an incentive for them not to re-offend.

* Aim to deliver 10 family visit days per year, each day will be split into 2 sessions of 3 hours. Thereby giving more families the possibility of accessing these days.
* Enrichment activities to support quality time with children of all ages as a family – taking part in activities and experiences such as arts and craft, treasure hunts, face painting and much more.
* Advice and signposting for families
* Prison Video support
* Storybook Dads: This is a fantastic initiative delivered by the Library at HMP Lewes where fathers can record themselves reading a story. This is put on a CD and sent to the family. To apply for this, prisoners need to complete a ‘Storybook Dads’ app.
* Advice on current groups and in-cell workbooks in wide-ranging subjects including parenting and relationships.
* 1:1 support for prisoners
* Support for families and loved ones through a regularly updated Facebook page
* Pact offer Families of those in custody at HMP Lewes who are experiencing financial hardship opportunity to apply for a grant.

**EARLY DAYS IN CUSTODY**

A family member or significant other entering custody often causes significant upheaval to families, particularly children’s & dependents, and as a result it is vital that we stabilise and support the family unit where possible and as soon as possible. Providing key information and support at the point of arrival for prisoners and their families is critical to maintaining family ties. We will work to develop:

* Supportive induction processes
* We will work to further the relationship with partner agencies to develop improved approaches to reduce the negative impact and distress to families at this critical time.

**CONTACT**

There are several ways to contact a friend or family member in the early days of custody.

* You can write them a letter and include their name and prison number in the address, if you do not have their prison number yet, include their date of birth to help identify them.
* You can email them using the [www.email-a-prisoner.com](http://www.email-a-prisoner.com) facility. You will need their prison number to do this. This facility allows you to pay for the prisoner to reply.

When first in custody, prisoners will have the opportunity to have a 5 minute ‘First night call’ This does not always happen on the first night in custody and does rely on the prisoner knowing the phone number. It is important to find out the prison number during this phone call so that sending money and emailing can be done.

After this call, the prisoner will need to complete a phone number request app with both social and legal numbers. Once they are cleared, a PIN number will be issued, and phone calls can be made. This process can take up to 2 weeks depending on public protection restrictions.

**SENDING MONEY**

To send money to a prisoner at HMP Lewes is done through [www.gov.uk/send-prisoner-money](http://www.gov.uk/send-prisoner-money). Money is transferred into their spends account each week that can be used for canteen items and phone credit. Cash and cheques are no longer accepted.

**SAFEGUARDING**

As an establishment HMP Lewes has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, therefore contact must be in the best interest of the child.

We recognise that not all family relationships are positive. Family members may sometimes be the direct or indirect victims of a prisoner’s offence such as domestic abuse and harassment. These individuals have the right to protection from their perpetrator and in all cases, permission should be sought from the victim and any relevant partner agencies before making contact. Other family or significant others may be enablers, contributing to their offending behaviour. While it may be appropriate for an individual to have access to a named child under close supervision; irrespective of the individual’s wishes, the primary consideration must be whether it is in the child’s best interests for the whether a visit should take part. To prevent inappropriate contract thorough safeguarding practices are in place at HMP Lewes from the point of Reception and throughout the custodial sentence:

* First Night contact with family is subject to screening for risk and as such only allowed where no risk is present. Ongoing contact through written, phone or face to face contact is also subject to similar public protection screening processes.
* A risk assessment is carried out for anyone wishing to take part in Family Day visits dedicated to enabling individuals to spend time with their children or events which include children and their care giver. A separate assessment must be conducted for anyone subject to Safeguarding Children: Child Contact procedures.
* All staff delivering services to children are appropriately vetted, trained and have received clearance to work with children and vulnerable people (Disclosing and Baring Service – DBS, Security Vetting).
* HMP Lewes will ensure that staff are familiar with the local Safeguarding Policy.

**EQUAL ACCESS**

We will work alongside our equalities team to ensure that provision of and access to our services is fair and equal.

* We conduct Equality Impact Assessments on our strategy and provision to ensure that we are offering fair and equal access and identifying and accommodating specific needs.
* We work alongside our Operations and Residence functions to ensure that the incentives framework does not discriminate against prisoners wishing to access family days.

**SUPPORT FOR PRISONERS WHO DO NOT RECEIVE VISITS**

There are some individuals in our community who do not have family or significant others, and as a result do not have visits or contact with the outside. These individuals are at risk of becoming isolated, and it is critical that they are identified, and efforts made to re-connect them with family or significant others or encourage connections with individual’s who can support their progression and reduce their sense of isolation.

It is important to ensure that all family and significant other details are recorded on reception into HMP Lewes.

HMP Lewes has processes in place to through our Chaplaincy Department whereby prisoners are identified, visited, and signposted to the function most able to address the issue. They are also able to facilitate a Family Tracing Service through our contacts with the Salvation Army.

**CARE LEAVERS**

Transition to adulthood is a difficult time for many young people, but it can be especially so for young adults who have been in care. Unlike many young people, care leavers often do not have the emotional, financial, and personal support of parents and other family members.

When compared to the general population care leavers are less likely to be in education, employment, or training. Anyone aged between 21-24 years of age who have been in the care of the local authority (Care Leavers) is entitled to a personal advisor support from the local authority and anyone who meets these criteria will be identified by OMU and signposted to the Local Authority. The Offender Management Unit will lead on this work and will:

* Identify care leavers and ensure responsible local authorities are engaged in planning processes as appropriate via partnership working with their personal advisor.
* Develop an effective working relationship with the responsible local authorities
* Support development of reliable and trusting relationships with Key workers and POM’s
* Enable care leavers to have space to safely share experiences of being in care e.g., carefully facilitated support groups and peer mentors.

**FOREIGN NATIONALS**

We do not assume that someone who is a foreign national will not have family and/or significant other contacts in the UK who would be able to visit. Visits with family and significant others who are prisoner in the UK are encouraged and supported.

* Processes within Safer Custody and Equalities department to identify if someone is a foreign national and utilise this information in accordance with PSI 49/2011 to ensure that prisoners can access the telephone in order to make and maintain contact with family members who reside overseas. This may include access to the telephone outside of usual hours to accommodate for differing time zones.
* Chaplaincy facilitates access to the LORAS project which is a visiting scheme for foreign nationals and immigration detainees.

**Help with Prison Visits Scheme (previously Assisted Prison Visits Scheme)**

The scheme can help with funding to support eligible family and significant others to gain assistance when visiting loved ones in custody. All our Family Services and Visits staff and volunteers who come into contact with visitors are aware of the APVS and ensure that:

* + - The APV scheme is widely advertised in visitor’s centres, visit and/or waiting rooms and in the prison library.
		- Induction programmes or similar must provide basic information about the APV scheme.
		- That application packs and information about the scheme in Welsh and a range of other languages and in Braille or on audio tape or CD must be readily available and easily accessible to all.
		- A confirmation of visits system operates.
		- Each prison will use a special visit date stamp to confirm that the visit took place.

**GATEWAY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS**

At Lewes we currently have the following services which help to maintain contact with families and significant others:

* **Safer Custody hotline and email**

At HMP Lewes we have an effective and robust process for families and significant others to contact the prison when they have concerns about a prisoner. This process allows us to receive and act promptly in response to calls via the Safer Custody Hotline, monitor the nature of concerns, signpost appropriately and evaluate our responses. A monthly management 10% QA check is carried out by the Safety Hub Manager. If there are any issues or concerns these can be identified and addressed at either the weekly Safety Intervention Meeting, Monthly Safety Meeting or Monthly Safety Task Force, depending on urgency.

If calls are received outside of working hours, callers are redirected to the Orderly Officer who will respond and notify Safer Custody via the functional mailbox. This information will be collated along with all other information that comes directly into the Safer Custody Hotline.

* A list of contact numbers is attached in the annexes of this strategy and is also available in the waiting areas, visits hall and visitors’ centre.
* All newly received prisoners and their family are provided with information about early days in custody which includes information on visits in a format that is easy to understand.  We have produced a comprehensive visitors’ guide with information for those wishing to visit. During the first night process, we ask prisoners if there is anyone, they would like the guide to be sent to. This is then emailed by social visits staff. At this stage, prisoners are also offered a shorter leaflet which they can post to family members.
* Peer Induction workers are briefed on family issues and an information sheet outlining Spurgeons’ services for families is handed out with the Prisoner Induction Passport.
* Email a prisoner: [www.emailaprisoner.com](http://www.emailaprisoner.com).
* The Visitor’s Guide and Safer Custody Hotline information is provided on the Prison Finder internet site.
* The Visitor’s Guide, Family Strategy and information from partner agencies and services are available in the Visitors Centre, Visits Hall and HMPPS intranet.
* The Family Strategy is published on the NICCO website.
* Maintain family services as an agenda item on the establishment Community Consultative Committee allowing ideas and suggestions to be made and to communicate information on the provision of family services.
* Facebook Families page

**TRAINING**

HMP Lewes recognises that Family and Significant Others is a whole prison approach, involving every department and every member of staff. In order to underpin this moral and professional obligation we will train our staff in the importance of maintaining family ties to reduce reoffending, our family services provider, PACT deliver training sessions to Keyworkers and other relevant staff to raise awareness of the importance of family ties and the services we offer at Lewes.

We will continue to do our utmost to make visiting HMP Lewes a more positive experience and ensure our staff are trained to be sensitive to the needs of children when carrying out searching of them or their parents.

 **MEASURING OUTCOMES**

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As a means of improving our services here at Lewes we will ensure that we have robust processes in place to monitor and evaluation our services, including obtaining service user feedback: HMP Lewes will consult our prisoners and children on the format, environment, and objectives for all family activities during family days through the use of feedback forms and the Lewes consultation committee.

We will:

* Conduct Visitors Centre surveys.
* Run twice yearly Visitors Forums to obtain feedback which will be utilised to direct practice and improve our service.
* Conduct quarterly Visitors Surveys.
* Monitor the booking system for visits and understand how this is received by visitors to the prison. It is important to support anyone who is identified as not being able to use technology and offer support; this could be due to poor literacy, not familiar or comfortable with technology etc.
* Record the number of family visits held and the numbers who did not arrive.
* Monitoring and QA of all communication systems
* Record the use of Prison Visitors
* Record the Number of training sessions conducted and staff attendance.

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|  **Contacts Inside the Prison**  |
| **To contact HMP Lewes in an emergency** | **01273 785100 - You should then ask to speak with the Duty Orderly Officer at HMP Lewes**  |
| **Safer Custody Hotline**If you have immediate concerns about a prisoner | 01273 785392safercustodylewes@hmps.gsi.gov.uk |
| **Healthcare** | practiceplusgrp.hmplewes-admin@nhs.net |
| **Practice Plus**Substance Misuse Team | 01273 785153 |
| **PACT**Family services and Visitors Centre | 07850 065340 lewes@prisonadvice.org.uk |
| **Chaplaincy**This number is to communicate important events such as births and bereavements. | 01273 785216 |
| **External Contacts** |
| **Sussex Prisoners’ Families**Practical and emotional support in the community | 01273 499843Denis Byrnedenis@sussexprisonersfamilies.org.uk |
| [The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](https://www.nicco.org.uk/)NICCO |  www.nicco.org.uk |
| **National Prisoners’ Families Helpline** | 0808 808 2003 |
| **Turn2Us**Helps gain access to welfare benefits | <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/> |
| **Citizens Advice Bureau**General advice and support  | <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> |
| **Information about Assisted prison visits:**  | [www.gov.uk/help-with-prison-visits](http://www.gov.uk/help-with-prison-visits) |