



HM Prison &
Probation Service

HMP Leyhill

Families & Significant Others Strategy

2026

*Supporting and promoting positive contact with families
and significant others*



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Visits garden play area



Visits reading corner

Introduction

Vision

It is our vision that all prisoners have constructive and supportive relationships. We are committed to enabling positive contact with families and significant others as well as developing initiatives for those without supportive relationships to repair relationships or create new networks. Our relationship with PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust) is key to this success. We have also embedded family engagement in sentence planning and our personal officer scheme to ensure that interactions between prisoners and staff include conversations about ties to families and significant others.

Aims

We aim to meet the expectations of HMIP and the recommendations within Lord Farmer's 2017 review on the 'Importance of strengthening prisoners' family ties to prevent reoffending and reduce intergenerational crime'.

"It is safe, stable and nurturing relationships that are the key to human flourishing and wellbeing"

- Lord Farmer

- Prisoners are encouraged and supported to establish and maintain relationships with their families and significant others
- The prison supports the rights of children visiting their parent in prison
- Prisoners have regular and easy access to mail, telephones and other communications
- Prisoners can maintain access to the outside world through regular and easy access to visits and Release on Temporary Licence (RoTL)
- Prisoners and their visitors are able to attend visits in a clean, safe and respectful environment which meets their needs.



How to Contact Us

Prisoner safety

If you think a prisoner is at **immediate risk** please call the switchboard on **01454 264000**. Ask for the Orderly Officer and explain that your concern is an emergency.

You can contact the Safer Custody team by using the confidential hotline, 01454 264039, which is checked daily and can be used by families and significant others to report issues or concerns. If you leave your name and contact number your call will be returned and an update given. You can also contact the team using a web form which will be picked up within 72 hours:

www.prisonersfamilies.org/hmp-leyhill

How to report an incident

If you feel you have been discriminated against, or if you witnessed an incident against someone else, you should complete a 'Discrimination Incident Reporting Form' which are located in the Visitor's centre. Discrimination can relate to any protected characteristics.

If you would like to make a confidential complaint about a staff member, please email the Governing Governor at steve.cross@justice.gov.uk or write to him at the below address.

Getting to Leyhill

Address: HMP Leyhill, 1 Tortworth Road, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 8BT.

There is a free visitor's car park and disabled parking bays located close to the visit centre entrance.

Unfortunately for those without access to a car, HMP Leyhill can be difficult to get to. Bristol Parkway is the nearest mainline train station which is 30 minutes away by taxi. You can find more information at www.gov.uk/guidance/leyhill-prison

Staying in Touch



Video Calls: On Tuesdays and Thursdays 13:30 – 15:30 and 18:45 – 20:00. Prisoners will apply with 3 date options. Staff will book one of the dates based on availability and the visitor will then be informed.



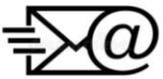
Phone calls: Prisoners can place phone calls to numbers that have been approved. Phones are available to use between 06:00 and 23:00.



Letters: Prisoners are entitled to send 1 x second class letter per week at the prison's expense. Additional letters may be sent out at prisoner's expense.



Release on Temporary Licence (RoTL): Contact can be made in the community during RoTL, with prior approval by staff



Emailprisoner.com: Family and significant others can email direct for the cost of a 2nd class stamp. Once the email is received a member of staff will print it off and hand it to the prisoner. Visitors can also pay the cost for prisoners to send a letter back via an email [eMates - the hassle free way to keep in touch](#)



Prison voicemail: Visitors can download an app on their phones that is linked to the prison telephone system whereby they can record and leave messages that prisoners can pick up from any phone in the prison. Prisoners are also able to leave a message in return [Prison Voicemail. Your voice matters.](#)



Letters for Children: PACT provide letter writing packs in the visits centre to encourage children to write letters into their relatives; these are provided at no costs to the families. In the visits room you will see lots of books, this is to encourage fathers and their children to read together



VOs to phone credit: Foreign National prisoners can exchange Visit Orders for pin credit. Once exchanged, a 5-minute phone call can be made to their family member or significant other living in another country. This is subject to approval by security and probation.

Before a visit

When to visit

Visits are on Saturdays and Sundays from 1:30 – 3:30

How to book a visit

The easiest way to book a visit is online at www.gov.uk/prison-visits

You can also call 0300 060 6510 between 9am – 6pm

Visitor centre

On arrival, you will enter the visitor centre which is run by PACT and is open from midday. There is a café located in the car park which is open from 10am – 4pm.



If you have any concerns before or after your visit, a member of the PACT team will be on hand in the visitor centre to help. The visitor centre has disabled access and there are toilets and baby changing facilities.

Searching

As an open prison searching is not routinely conducted. However, there will be occasions where searching will take place prior to a visit. In these instances, staff will guide visitors through the process. They may be supported by a drugs dog.

Lockers are available to secure your belongings prior to your visit



During and after a visit

Visits Hall

The visits hall is large and bright and has a children's play area equipped with a range of toys, books and games. An outdoor play area allows for activities to be enjoyed in the fresh air, weather permitting. During a visit, there will be members of prison staff in plain clothes as well as the PACT team to answer any questions and provide support before, during and after a visit.



Inside the visits hall there is a refreshments counter which provides hot and cold beverages and snack food. This is cash only and coins are preferred over notes.

PACT Family Support Workers provide 1:1 support to prisoners and families and significant others. They can work with social services, probation and schools to ensure appropriate support is provided for all. PACT can be contacted at www.prisonadvice.org.uk or via the Prisoners' Families Helpline: 0808 808 2003.

Help with the cost of visits: Visitors may be able to claim for help with prison visits including travel, accommodation and meals. Information is available in the Visitors Centre, on the website [Get help with the cost of prison visits - GOV.UK](#), via telephone 0300 063 2100 or email HelpwithPrisonVisits@justice.gov.uk

Extended Family Day Visits

HMP Leyhill hosts numerous extended family day visits throughout the year. There are family days which include child visitors and these take place during school holidays. There are also family days for adults only. These visits are in addition to the standard visiting orders.

These are held between 10am and 3pm and there are a range of activities to get involved with such as crafts, games, quizzes, and entertainment. A buffet lunch is also provided free of charge.

These days are open to prisoners who have been cleared through Public Protection and Security. All prisoners must pass security checks before they are allowed to attend a Children's Event. Anyone who is a risk to children may not attend a children's family day.

Upcoming children's family days 2026

7th April
26th May (for neurodiverse visitors)
4th August
27th October
22nd December



Upcoming adult family days 2026

31st March
14th July
8th September
15th December

Those with no contact



Prisoners who do not have any visitors are able to request a volunteer official prison visitor who will visit and provide support through phone calls or letters. This service is offered by the Chaplaincy Department.

National Association of Official Prison Visitors

Care Experienced:



Care leavers can continue to be supported by personal advisors and the local authority care leaver teams up to the age of 25 while in custody. This is facilitated through the OMU department. Anyone of any age who is care experienced is invited to regular forums, can receive 1:1 support from PACT and be signposted to agencies including the Care Leavers Association and the Rees Foundation who provide a range of support whilst in Custody and upon release.



Peer Support:



We are setting up a scheme where those who do not receive visits can take part in the visitors experience and get peer support from those in a similar position as well as peer mentors and Samaritan trained Listeners.

Family Learning & Development

Development

We use feedback to develop the offer for families and significant others. We do this by:

Conducting an annual prisoner needs analysis which includes questions about support to maintain family ties

Recommendations from inspections and audits are also implemented

Visitor surveys are completed by PACT following family days and other points through the year. Examples of recent feedback used to improve:

Introduced a visit session for visitors with additional needs who will struggle to adapt in a full visits hall.

We have signed up to the Storybook Dads scheme where prisoners can create a recording of them reading a book which can be given to children to listen and read along at home.

Hot food options are now available at the refreshments counter



Learning

PACT offer one-to-one support to both prisoners and their families and may seek additional support from other agencies, including children's services. A number of learning opportunities that contribute to better family relationships occur throughout the year. These will be offered as they become available. These could include parenting courses and workshops to promote interpersonal skills and abstinence from substances. External providers and community partners support us in this delivery. The multi-faith Chaplaincy team also provide support and learning opportunities.

Protecting the Public

Public Protection Contact Restrictions

Leyhill identifies contact restrictions which are necessary to protect the public. This includes restricting prisoners' contact with;

- the victims of current and previous offences at post-conviction stage,
- those who are protected by restraining orders or other court orders, including civil orders, which specify a no-contact condition,
- those who are at risk of witness intimidation,
- anyone who has made an unwanted prisoner contact request

How to stop unwanted prisoner contact

This service can be used by anyone who wishes to stop contact from prisoners including letters, phone calls and messages. It can be used by anyone experiencing unwanted contact or anybody on their behalf.

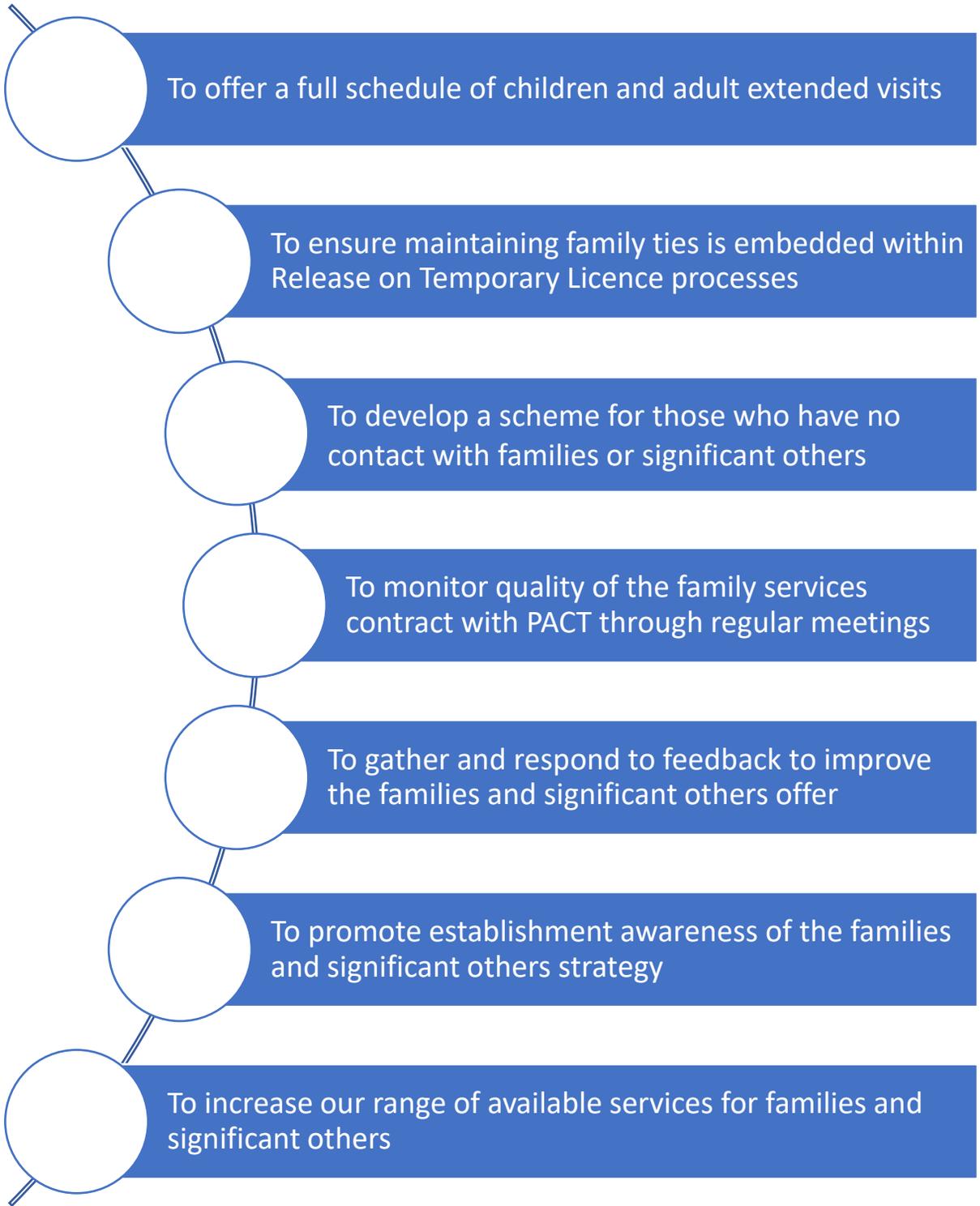
The quickest way to access the service is [Stop prisoner contact online form](#). You can also email unwantedprisonercontact@justice.gov.uk or call 0300 060 6699.

You can also use the service if you are worried about someone being released from prison.

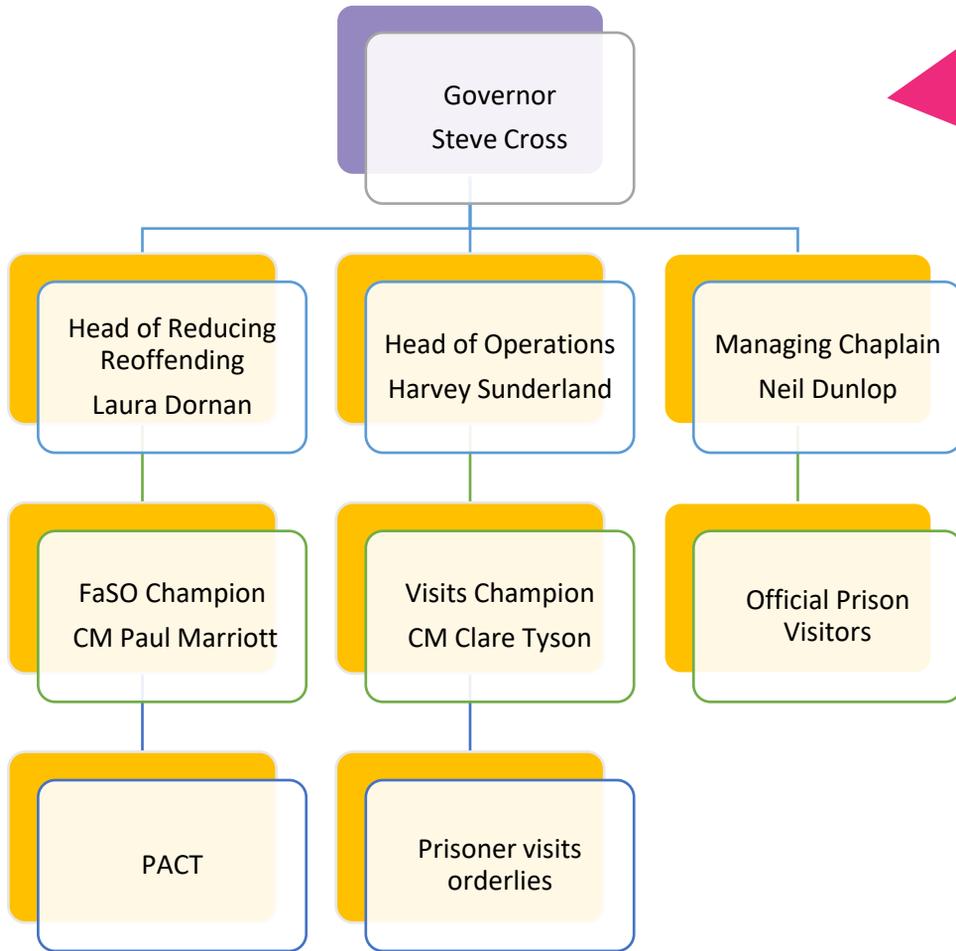
Safeguarding

Under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, Leyhill has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Governors must have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in their custody and other children with whom staff and prisoners have contact.

Future Plans



Staffing Structure



The **Head of Reducing Reoffending** is the Families & Significant Others (FaSO) Pathway Lead. They are a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and lead on the development of the FaSO strategy

The **Custodial Manager FaSO Champion** supports the pathway lead

The **Head of Operations** is the responsible for the operational running of visits sessions. They are a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT)

The **Custodial Manager Visits Champion** supports the Head of Operations and manages the team of prisoner visits orderlies.

Prisoner visits orderlies contribute to the running and development of visits sessions.

The **Managing Chaplain** manages the Official Prison Visitors scheme and is also the link to Salvation Army track-and-trace scheme.

The **PACT Family Engagement Manager** supports the promotion of family well-being and offers tailored support to both prisoners and families.

A **PACT Family Support Worker** supports the above and will be present during visits sessions. Both actively support the extended visits sessions with activities and information.