



PRIORITISING THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES WITHIN JUSTICE AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

POPS STRATEGY 2023 – 2026



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Welcome To Pops' Strategic Plan 2023-2026.

I am pleased to present POPS strategic plan for 2023-2026. Our aims for the period have been influenced by robust consultation with staff, users of our services and of course trustees and their input will provide the basis of our work during the period. As a charity founded in 1988 by families of those in prison, it is vital that we continue to listen to them, and are seen to act upon the issues that matter to them today. We know that their broader ranging support needs are better supported in the communities they live, and at the earliest stage of any identified problems they face.

POPS will prioritise the continued growth of its community support offer to families in order that any additional pressures and difficulties they may face, outside of the justice process, are managed better, reduced or eradicated. We will aim to be available to families at the earliest point of engagement with the justice process, including supporting them to prevent any escalation of identified difficulties. We will identify new funding opportunities and partners to achieve this, including wider Justice agencies, education support departments, and health and wellbeing agencies. We will place the issues identified by the families we support at the core of wider community services.

The specific needs of children affected by the imprisonment (or other sentence) of a family member is also a vital area of support that families have identified to us and that POPS will pursue. It is often assumed that having a family member in prison places children at greater risk of intergenerational offending but it is POPS' belief that other factors, including poverty, health inequalities and stigma, are more significant and our aim is to offer support to families within their communities to cope better in the face of such challenges.

POPS will of course continue to work with HMPPS, both prison and probation services, to ensure the good work undertaken to date, continues to be seen as a priority. We will ensure the positive role that families can contribute to both the resettlement and rehabilitation of their family member is acknowledged, when they themselves are supported. We will review our resource requirements, both financial and human, to ensure the success of this strategy, by developing a robust communications plan, focusing on promoting our work to a wider audience and investing in a staffing structure to ensure we can respond effectively to any identified opportunities.

This is an important plan for POPS as it is being produced in the midst of an ever-changing societal landscape that requires POPS to be 'fleet of foot' and able to respond to new initiatives to reduce the impact of the social, economic and health inequalities that families may face. Readiness to respond will be a vital component of this strategy and we will revisit it annually to ensure we are 'on track'. We will always be led by the needs of those we support hence we will continue to build on our 'space for all voices' ethos, offering families the opportunity to share their stories to inform local and national policy, support each other and be empowered to better cope with their situation.

Diane Curry OBE

POPS' Vision & Mission



Vision

For all families, including children, affected by the justice system to feel valued and to be treated fairly, so they can live free from stigma, enabling them to actively participate, take up new opportunities and consider future possibilities.



Mission

To provide the support families identify they need and promote the changes required to enable children and families of those in the justice system to cope better and to thrive.



Values

- To be supportive and non-judgemental in our approach.
- To listen and act upon the experiences families share with us.
- To encourage active participation amongst the families we support.
- To value the benefits of robust partnerships.
- To acknowledge and embrace the principles of diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation.

Current Context

The need for POPS' family support services has never been more apparent. It is widely acknowledged that the justice system is experiencing difficulties including a backlog of court hearings, an increase in the prisoner population, and limited regimes due to staff shortages. Many families we support are experiencing living in long term poverty and research informs that exposure to poverty can have an adverse impact on their mental health and well being and contribute to poorer outcomes, including engagement in crime.

1

The prison population is currently 87,128 (MOJ, Sept. 2023) of which 83,590 are men and 3,538 are women (Howard League/PrisonWatch, 2023). Over the previous 10 years government spend on building new prisons, costing 11.6 billion pounds, is now predicted to be unable to satisfy the demand for prison places and many existing prisons remain overcrowded with little regime activity and reduced staffing numbers. Prisoners are spending long periods in their cell, often isolated.

2

Families tell us that they are concerned about the potential for self harm and suicide in relation to their family member in prison. In 2021 there were 70 self-inflicted deaths, of which 37% of those deaths were people on remand and 21% occurred during the first 30 days in custody. In the 12 months to March 2023, there were 59,722 reported incidents of self harm by people in prison with a 51% increase amongst the female population from the previous year (Gov.uk, March 2023).

3

Children of those in prison receive little support. No-one routinely monitors the parental status of prisoners in the UK or systematically identifies children of prisoners or which services they access. The government still does not know how many people in prison have children under 18 - a study in 2020 estimated that 320,000 children were affected by parental imprisonment at any one time.

4

Family and friends are a highly significant factor in enabling the successful resettlement of their loved one upon release from custody, but importantly, if supported, as also being able to divert them from entering the Justice system in the first instance. A supported family can prevent escalation of any involvement of their children & young people in anti-social behaviours, begin to address underlying problems, improve outcomes and reduce the potential for risk of future offending.

5

People from BAME backgrounds are disproportionately represented within the justice system and made up 34% of the remand population in September 2021. POPS will continue to support local agencies who can offer specific interventions to them as well as upskill POPS' staff to understand the specific matters for families of those in the system with protected characteristics.

POPS' Impact

POPS provides emotional and practical support to around 200,000 families every year. This support includes:

- Advice on how to navigate the prison visiting system as a first time visitor.
- Liaison and mediation on behalf of families with prison departments including safeguarding, property and health and wellbeing.
- Providing well managed visits environments that offer tabletop activities for children to engage with the person they are visiting in a meaningful way.
- Providing a community support offer to families of People on Probation and released from Custody.
- Offering time and space for visitors to access emotional support and access to specialist services.
- Assistance with maintaining family ties, including the provision of courses and workshops that focus on first days in custody, what to tell the children, how to be a good parent whilst in prison and preparation for release or transition to another establishment.
- Opportunities to contribute to influencing local and national policy via regular family forums, quarterly feedback questionnaires, speaking at conferences and online forums.

POPS also provides social networking visits for those who do not receive family visits, homework clubs for those with children and regular less formal family days including for those with no visiting children.

POPS provides community-based support to families across Greater Manchester as part of the GMCA Integrated Resettlement Services, assisting families of those supervised as part of a Probation supervision order or sentence, with matters including identifying and supporting relationship issues.

POPS is committed to continue to support women who are vulnerable, via our Farida Women's Centre in Oldham, and use their experiences to influence local and national policy decisions as part of the Greater Manchester Women's Support Alliance, contributing to better outcomes for women and their families.

POPS provides training on the impact of imprisonment on families and continues to contribute to statutory and government policy forums, commissions, academic research and media requests with a view to reducing stigma, highlighting best practice and encouraging robust partnerships.



POPS' Aims

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1 Increase the focus of responsibility, for supporting families of those in the justice system, amongst a wider range of agencies.

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2 Publicly promote the value of supporting families earlier to prevent them from experiencing the justice system, focusing on better outcomes.

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3 To formulate an effective and efficient organisational staffing structure to ensure the success of the strategy.

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4 To identify future funding pipelines, both local and national, to support the work we undertake.

Aim 1

Increase the focus of responsibility, for supporting families of those in the Justice system, amongst a wider range of agencies.

1. To raise POPS' profile, and the needs of families, including children, to a wider range of service providers, including Department for Education (schools), health agencies, police, sentencers and policy makers.
2. Forge funded and non-funded alliances for the delivery of services and for training on the impact of imprisonment on families, to wider agency staff.

We will do this by:

Developing an engagement strategy to identify new funding, new opportunities, and new potential for influencing a wider agenda that recognises supporting families as a force for good.

Developing stronger relationships with the police to implement support for families and children at the point of arrest.

Develop a robust relationship with sentencers to consider the impact of sentencing on families, especially children.

Develop a network of locality based schools and Family Hubs to influence their understanding of, and develop a response to, the preventions of the broader health, wellbeing and behaviour, of young people within the families we support.



A photograph of two women looking at a notebook. The woman on the right is wearing a blue polo shirt with the POPS logo (a stylized family icon) and the text 'POPS' on it. The woman on the left is wearing a black jacket and glasses. They are both looking down at a notebook on a table. The image is framed by a large, semi-transparent orange circle on the right and a pink circle on the left.

Aim 2

Publicly promote the value of supporting families earlier to prevent them from experiencing the justice system, focusing on better outcomes.

1. Launch POPS' communications marketing strategy.
2. Improve media focus using digital, visual and verbal resources.
3. Revise POPS' brand statements.
4. New website operational.
5. Monitor and listen to feedback from those who use our services, providing them with a platform to share their stories.

We will do this by:

Reviewing POPS' branding and associated service offers to ensure a full suite of delivery models are developed, including to families at the earliest stage.

POPS' website reflecting new branding, new delivery models available and to ensure it is family friendly, providing the support they identify they need, including being more visual, verbal and interactive in its formation.

Use our experience of our 'get it off your chest' family forum to provide local and national opportunities for families to engage with POPS and other identified providers of service, to have their say, raise matters pertinent to them and to influence delivery and policy.

Aim 3

To formulate an effective and efficient organisational staffing structure to ensure the success of the strategy.

1. To formulate a robust staffing structure to ensure capacity to deliver the strategy, including an effective and efficient business support team.
2. Improve POPS' workforce recruitment, including onboarding, ongoing support and access to online training.
3. To recruit three new trustees.

We will do this by:

Undertaking a business staffing review to accommodate the needs of the smooth running of the organisation and to ensure the capacity to deliver the aims of the strategy.

Continuing to develop an inclusive recruitment policy that considers and promotes the potential for those with lived experience, those from diverse backgrounds and those who reflect the recognised protected characteristics, to be viewed as vital to our service delivery.

Providing an online training portal for staff and volunteers to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to undertake their roles and responsibilities when supporting families.

Recruiting new trustees to ensure robust governance of our organisation, focusing on the requirements of risk management, new funding pipelines, safeguarding, and our commitment to those with lived experience as an integral aspect to the management and delivery of POPS' services.





Aim 4

To identify future funding pipelines, both local and national, to support the work we undertake.

1. Identify local and national government priorities and associated funding opportunities to meet the needs of families and their children earlier, including health & wellbeing, parenting (family hubs) and youth services.
2. Employ bid manager to focus on diversifying POPS income streams
3. Develop new funding strategy.

We will do this by:

Promoting our experiential value to the ongoing debates within local and national Justice departments in response to the needs of families, children, and those in prison and on Probation.

Working with the newly recruited bid manager to devise a plan to identify new family support commissioning opportunities across education, health and children and adult community-based services.

Consider how we might target philanthropic giving.

Grow unrestricted income via POPS retail outlets including e-commerce and general fundraising

Refreshing Our Focus For 2023-26



Resources

Our staff, volunteers, and trustees are our greatest assets – they enable us to deliver effective services and better understand the needs of those who we support.

We will target our efforts on recruiting new trustees and volunteers to compliment our current staffing team.

POPS' staff and volunteers will have access to a comprehensive online learning portal that can be expanded and developed to equip them not only with mandatory skills and qualifications needed within their roles but to undertake new learning to assist with their development within the organisation, or elsewhere, in the future.

POPS is expanding the use of our new cloud based server to develop a staff resource area providing access to staff to all POPS key resources, including updated staff handbook, project specific resources, templates and access online to regular newsletter.

POPS will invest free reserves to enhance our core business team to ensure our capacity to deliver on the aims of this strategic plan.



Partners and Funders



HM Prison &
Probation Service

GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY

**mitchell
charlesworth**
Chartered Accountants • Business Advisors

**Griffiths
Armour &**

 **arrowIT**

serco



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

SUPPORTING FAMILIES OF THOSE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM SINCE 1988.



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