



# Home Office

## Crime Reduction & Community Safety Group

### Tilley Awards 2008 Application form

Please ensure that you have read the guidance before completing this form. ***By making an application to the awards, entrants are agreeing to abide by the conditions laid out in the guidance.*** Please complete the following form in full, within the stated word limit and ensuring the file size is no more than 1MB. Failure to do so will result in your entry being rejected from the competition.

Completed application forms should be e-mailed to [tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk).

All entries must be received by noon on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008**. No entries will be accepted after this time/date. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Alex Blackwell on 0207 035 4811.

#### **Section A: Application basics**

1. Title of the project: Families...a Critical Time for Change
2. Key issue that the project is addressing e.g. Alcohol related violence: Supporting offenders' families

#### **Author contact details**

3. Name of application author: Laura Stevenson
4. Organisation submitting the application: Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group
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7. Telephone number: 0161 702 1000

#### **Secondary project contact details**

8. Name of secondary contact involved in the project: Zoe Gan-Rankin
9. Secondary contact email address: [zoe@partnersofprisoners.co.uk](mailto:zoe@partnersofprisoners.co.uk)
10. Secondary contact telephone number: 0161 702 1000

### **Endorsing representative contact details**

11. Name of endorsing senior representative from lead organisation: Kevin Williams

12. Endorsing representative's email address: Kevin.williams@gonw.gsi.gov.uk

13. For all entries from England & Wales please state which Government Office or Welsh Assembly Government your organisation is covered by e.g. GO East Midlands: Government Office North West

**14. Please mark this box with an X to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry** (this is to prevent duplicate entries of the same project):



**Section B: Summary of application - *In no more than 400 words use this space to provide a summary of your project under the stated headings (see guidance for more information).***

#### **Scanning:**

Offenders' families identified that there was no service structure or support available to them to help them deal with the stress, isolation and stigma associated with having a family member in prison, They wanted to support their family members and maintain family ties because they believed it was an important factor in helping reduce the risk of re-offending behaviour. From this Farida Anderson MBE founded Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group (POPS) to address these issues.

#### **Analysis:**

POPS identified that the Problem Analysis Triangle did not take into consideration offenders' families demonstrating that there is a gap in the model. It demonstrates that there is not statutory agency that has offenders' families and children as a priority on their key performance. This is in conflict with the evidence that validates there is a need for offenders' families to be provided with a specific and bespoke service. Every year POPS support over 13,500 families and believe that families can play an important role in the reduction of re-offending.

#### **Response:**

POPS has developed a number of services which are Visitors Centres, Family Link Workers, Prisoners Families National Telephone Helpline and the Black Prisoner Support Project. The aim of this network of services is to provide a continuum of care package for the offenders' family. These areas were chosen because POPS is a user led service and this is what people told us that they wanted.

When POPS was first founded there were some initial difficulties with the name that was chose, and the cause of the charity. These are all things that we have learnt to overcome by helping raise awareness with other agencies to break down stereotypes and being completely transparent to public scrutiny.

#### **Assessment:**

We measure our performance against the Performance Management Framework to ensure we are continuously improving the services that we offer and our performance. We do feel that the work we are doing is a success because there is research that clarifies maintaining family ties is important providing a safe support structure. POPS want as to share the good practice we have achieved in the North West with other regions to help reduce disparities in the services and support available to offenders' families.

**State number of words: 367**

**Section C: Description of project** - Describe the project in no more than 4,000 words. Please refer to the full guidance for more information on what the description should cover, in particular section 12.

**Scanning:**

Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group, (POPS), was set up in 1988, by a group of families trying to support a loved one in prison. Farida Anderson MBE, (Chief Executive), founded POPS when she found herself in an impossible situation because her husband was given a prison sentence. Like many other women in a similar situation, Farida did not know what to do, who to tell and where to turn for help. Visiting a prison 20 years ago was nothing like visiting a prison today. Visitors were made to queue outside the prison (come rain or shine), nothing was explained to them; in fact they were treated terribly. The services and support that were available to offenders' families were limited and very much based on a post code lottery. If you lived in the wrong area there was little support available to you.

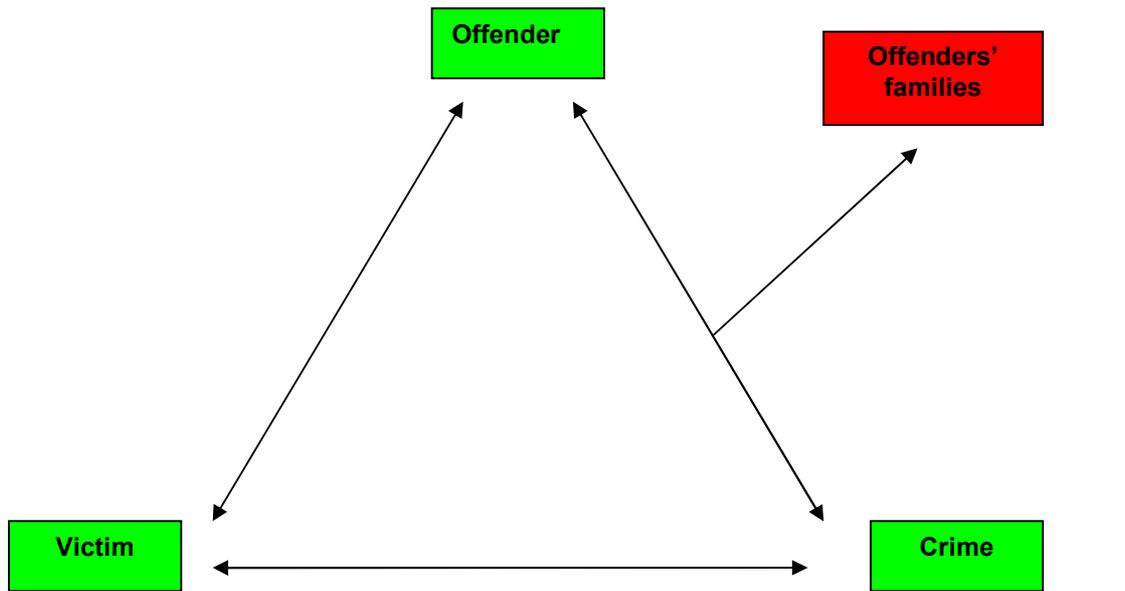
Farida identified a gap in the availability and quality of services available to offenders' families. Initially Farida identified these problems as she herself was a service user. When she talked to and listened to the experiences of other service users she soon realised the extent of the problem. Discovering there was a lack of support structures for offenders' families Farida developed a bespoke service that addressed the following issues.

- Help offenders' families to cope with the stress, isolation and stigma attached to having a family member in prison.
- Help offenders' families support a loved one in prison to reduce the risk of the prisoner re-offending.
- Maintain family ties to reduce the risk of intergenerational offending.
- Reduce crime in the North West.
- Make services more accessible for offenders' families.

This was the very early and organic beginning of POPS. Our grass root level of development has enabled us to have intrinsic experience and understanding in how imprisonment affects families, offenders and the community. POPS is a pioneer in terms of creative and innovative service provision. We are one of a handful of Offenders Family Support Groups operating in the region and have built an excellent reputation, which enables us to influence on a local, regional national and international strategic level.

Over the years POPS has systematically addressed the issues of offenders' families to ensure that the services it offers and the process that it uses are reflective of offenders' families needs. We are continuously moving forward and building new partnerships with other agencies to develop new ways to reach and support offenders' families.

**Analysis:**  
**Diagram 1**



The Problem Analysis Triangle, diagram 1, shows the three sides of the triangle; victim, offender and crime. Each has a support structure which is outlined below:

- The offender is supported by the Prison Service and Probation.
- The crime is supported by the police.
- The victim is supported by the police and Victim Support.

POPS has identified a gap in the triangle. It does not take into account the offenders' family. There is no statutory agency, i.e. Prison Service, Probation, Police, Criminal Justice System, Children's Services, Schools, Education, Health etc, that has offenders' children and families as a priority on their key performance targets. No statutory body is taking responsibility for this group and no one is recognizing their individual and pertinent needs. Yet the statistics on offenders' families speak for themselves.

- Over '160,000' children have a parent or sibling in prison. Children of prisoners have about three times the risk of mental health problems compared to their peers.
- Children of prisoners have three times the risk of anti-social/delinquent behaviour compared to their peers.
- 65% of boys with a convicted parent, go on to offend.

*(DCSF and MOJ Children of Offenders Review. Ministry of Justice and Department for Children Schools and Families. (2007).*

- 67% of people released from prison go on to re-offend within two years. (Neighbourhood by neighbourhood: local action to reduce re-offending. The Coalition on Social and Criminal Justice. 2006).
- 43% of prisoners say they have lost contact with their families since entering the prison system. (The Social Exclusion Unit. 2002).

POPS has recently conducted a piece of research in local authorities that will be published at the end of April. It will highlight the fact that many statutory agencies that provide services to children and families were unaware of the fact that they were supporting someone in prison. Schools for example were unaware that there were any children in their school that had a family member in prison. These agencies also commented that if they were aware of the fact they would not know how to approach the subject and what the best possible course of action would be.

Every year POPS supports 13,500 families. This figure validates that there is a distinct need for offenders' families to be provided with a specific and bespoke service. POPS feels that families are often left out of the decision making process and we believe that families can play a role in the reduction of re-offending, if included in the sentence planning of the offender and acknowledged as an 'Offender Supporter'. Involving families can aid with successful beginning-to-end management of offenders. We feel that families can offer positive suggestions for addressing the

problems that the offender faces, for example drugs or mental health issues, and can act as a support for the offender to encourage them to persevere with the appropriate training programmes recommended to them by their personal officer.

**Response:**

POPS has worked alongside and built partnerships with a range of stakeholders Some of these include:

- Service Users
- Prisoners
- Links to the LA
- National Offender Management Service
- Prison Service
- Probation
- Youth Offending Team
- Local Criminal Justice Board
- Local authorities
- Police
- Other Voluntary Community Sector organizations
- Local community

They have supported POPS in developing a number of services to address the problems that have been outlined. POPS core services can be broken down into these key areas: -

- Visitors Centres
- Families Link Workers
- Prisoners Families National Telephone Helpline
- Black Prisoner Support Project

***Visitors Centres***

POPS currently manages seven contracts for Visitor Centres across the North West region. These are HMPYOI Hindley, HMP Kirkham, HMP Liverpool, HMP Buckley Hall, HMP Garth & Wymott, HMP Hull and HMPYOI Forest Bank.

Though the centres vary slightly each of them provide a warm and friendly environment where families can sit down and relax before and after a visit. Within the centres we employ teams of staff to help make the visiting experience as welcoming and stress free as possible.

The centre staff provide refreshments, information and support within comfortable and welcoming surroundings. The staff can advise on numerous issues for example financial support (Assisted Prison Visits Unit), security, and property etc. Our staff signpost families to appropriate local services and also organise drop in surgeries with local Health Workers, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Workers and other relevant agencies that can provide for the needs of the families visiting. They can often act as a link between the family and the prison, particularly in establishments where we provide a Family Link Worker. Our play workers provide activities and help to provide an informal and relaxed atmosphere for children during visits.

All our centres are strategically linked to Pathway 6 of the National Reducing Re-offending Action Plan through the Visitor Centre Steering Groups (members of which include key partners within the prison). This steering group feeds into the Pathway 6 meetings within the prison. We encourage Visitor Centre user involvement/consultation by setting up Visitor/Family forums in each of our Visitor Centres. These forums provide a link from the Visitors into the steering groups and help to steer the development of the Visitor Centre services from the identification of need, gaps and service feedback.

***Family Link Workers***

POPS have an expert team of qualified Family Link Workers, which provide services specifically to bridge the gap between offenders and their families. We currently have 7 Family Link Workers. POPS' Family Link Workers are based in prisons and act as a broker between families and offenders ensuring that families are able to support the

offender effectively. Family Link Workers have sometimes been referred to as a lifeline for families, as they can be their only means of learning about the prison regime and the well being of the offender.

They are genuinely committed to the job and work hard to develop relationships with prison staff on the wings and in the Visits Hall. They also work with various departments and agencies within the prisons such as Education, Public Protection, Chaplaincy and the Counseling, Advice, Referral, Assessment and Through Care teams (CARATS). Youth Offending Teams (YOT) and the Safeguard team in Young Offenders Institutes and Probation in adult establishments. All our staff have access to Offender Assessment Teams (OASys) and/or Asset.

### ***National Prisoners Families Helpline***

The Prisoners Families Helpline is lead by Action for Prisoners Families and operated by POPS and Ormiston Children and Families Trust.

Since 2003 the Helpline has received over 30,000 calls, which averaged at around 1,000 calls a month throughout 2005. In 2006 however, calls have significantly increased and in the first two months alone we took almost 3,000 calls. This increase in calls reflects the rise in the prison population and the increase in Helpline publicity/reputation.

This service identifies barriers families experience trying to support an offender. Any complaints and barriers reported to the Helpline are feed back to the appropriate service. For example in a recent survey of prison booking lines the Prisoners Families Helpline was able to collate all information and complaints into a report which heavily influenced the results of the survey. The survey has lead to some prisons effecting a change in their staffing policy.

### **Black Prisoners Support Project (BPSP)**

The BPSP stemmed from a need highlighted by many of the Black families we were supporting via our Family Services. Raising issues that affect Black Prisoners has now become a priority for the BPSP and the acceptance of the existence of institutional racism has been a major step forward. However, there is still a long way to go in order that policy is transferred into practice and we continue to strive towards ensuring equality of service for Black offenders.

POPS' BPSP has just completed the design, development and delivery of a Black Offender empowerment course (Routes 2 Roots), Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Offenders' Resettlement Leaflets and BME Family Resettlement Leaflets via the European Social Fund (ESF) funded Innovation means prison and communities together Project (IMPACT).

POPS' BPSP was also funded in 2004 (by NPS) to develop a Diversity awareness-training tool called the 'Diverse Maps CD-rom'. This CD-rom was designed to support diversity training for a variety of staff working across the Criminal Justice system.

The group work and the empowerment course both aim to provide Black men with an understanding of their culture and build confidence. The work we provide also aims to address the specific needs of BME offenders and identify their resettlement needs.

### ***Who do we influence in terms of our Black Prisoner Support Services?***

POPS is a founder member and chairs the Board of Trustees of the National Body of Black Prisoner Support Groups (NBBPSG). This charity was established in 1998 by various groups of practitioners in the Criminal Justice Field, working directly with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Offenders. The organisation is concerned with the isolation experienced in their work and the un-supported environment with regard to the raising and addressing of their issues. NBBPSG projects aim is to create a model of good practice in capacity building BME Offender Support Groups and Supporting BME Offenders, which can be transferred to other regions.

With the recognised Offender Management Model introduced by National Offender Management Service (NOMS), POPS has now developed a network of services that strive to create a continuum of care package for offenders' family. POPS sees the offenders' family as an Offender Supporter that should be provided a service from arrest to release. Wit this support POPS believes families can play an important role in helping reduce the chance of re-offending.

The reason this network of service was chosen is because POPS is a user led service. These are the areas of concern where people are not receiving support. The NBBPSG was established because of institutional racism. The Visitors Centre and National Helpline were set up because there was nothing there before

POPS encountered a number of difficulties when they were initially founded. People were highly suspicious of the name 'Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group'. Many believed that if they gave POPS money the families would 'run off' with it which was and still is not the case. We needed to break down these stereotypes and raise awareness of offenders' families to dispel the myth that 'Families are not guilty by association'. As a black woman leading on the project Farida came across a number of prejudices and obstacles. People had negative pre-conceptions about Farida and her motives for founding POPS. Consequently POPS ensured that they were completely transparent, accountable and open to public scrutiny.

We continually review our services and processes to identify if and where changes and new response need to take place. Being a user led organization means we listen to the concerns and issues that offenders' families have. This enables POPS to improve service delivery and drive up our quality standards. POPS have come to realize that families only spend two days of the year in prison visiting their family, while the rest of their time is spent out in the community. The way we work with other agencies has now changed because we identify gaps in our service delivery. By linking with other Voluntary Community Sector Agencies we are able to work in partnership and share good practice on an equal platform.

In line with 'Every Child Matters' we are also focusing more on the impact imprisonment has on Children to help reduce the effects of intergenerational offending. We recently held a conference in partnership with Barnardo's called 'Families under stress...children at risk'. The aim of this conference was to:

- Raise awareness of the impact imprisonment has on children.
- Highlight the links between imprisonment and the offending behaviour of prisoners' children.
- Promote partnership between agencies that are working with offenders, their children and families.
- Give offenders' children and families a voice.

Initial considerations given to the sustainability of the project were mainly financial. There was very little money available to POPS due to its very nature. People were very skeptical about the cause and it was difficult to obtain funding via grants. We quickly realised that to ensure that POPS would become sustainable we had to develop new skills and become more creative in how we generated an income. Knowing we could not depend on grants we learnt everything we could about the Governments Agenda on transforming public services. We then looked at how POPS could offer a service that would fit inline with this. Initially we started taking on small contracts and over time as we grew we took on bigger contracts. We are still aware that to sustain a charity, that has no government financial support, we will need to evaluate and assess our practices and ensure that we are inline with both our objectives and resources.

Ideally in the near future we want to gain access to offenders' families at the point of arrest. Victim Support is alerted once a crime has been reported and the victim in question is referred automatically to them. We would like to see a similar process put in place at police stations for the offenders' family. We would like families to be automatically referred to POPS so a support structure can be put into place at the earliest possible opportunity to help families deal with the stress of arrest.

#### **Assessment:**

POPS uses the Performance Management Framework to measure the results of our service delivery against. We set strategic objectives which are then reviewed annually to evaluate our performance and identify our strong and weak areas so improvements can be made. Our Board of Directors monitor our performance who are made up from a range of sectors such as Education and the Prison Service. They ensure that the decisions POPS make stay inline with its' objectives and are for the benefit of the organization as a whole.

We have had a number of difficulties since POPS was founded as the groups that we work with are one of the hardest to reach groups and are not always recognised as being disadvantaged. This has caused some issues with sustaining the work we do but it has also made us work harder in raising awareness with other agencies as to the issues of this group.

It has been difficult as a Voluntary Community Sector Organisation to develop an effective IT system that evaluates our results. This is due to financial constraints. We are aware that is important and is something that we are hoping to develop in the future.

Currently we are collating data from the Visitor Centres that we run. These provide POPS with demographical statistics on where visitors are located, their gender and age. This helps us to identify where the crime hot spots are in Manchester and what areas offenders' families live in. This means that services can be targeted at these particular areas.

A key lesson that POPS learnt twenty years ago is that there is a disparity in the services and support available to offenders' families. In some areas agencies are in existence where in other areas people do not have this access or support. POPS still feels that today there is a 'postcode lottery' as to what service there are available in the area that you live in. POPS feels that this is an issue that must be addressed on a wider scope. When you position this issue against the conclusions from the 'Neighbourhood by neighbourhood: local action to reduce re-offending. The Coalition on Social and Criminal Justice. 2006' supporting families clearly makes a difference. They found the following.

- Employment can reduce the risk of re-offending by between a third and a half.
- Stable housing can reduce re-offending by more than 20 per cent.
- Education and training is vital.
- Family contact is important because it can provide a safe support structure and network for the offender upon release and beyond.

POPS wants to share good practice with other regions to help them support offenders' families. At the very least we hope that this entry brings to some peoples mind the forgotten victims in crime, the family of offenders and the important role that they can play in offender management in reducing the risk of re-offending.

**State number of words used: 3128**

**Section D: Endorsement by Senior Representative** - *Please insert letter from endorsing representative, this will not count towards your word or 1MB size limit restrictions.*

**Checklist for Applicants:**

1. Have you read the process and application form guidance?
2. Have you completed all four sections of the application form in full including the endorsement from a senior representative?
3. Have you checked that your entry addresses all aspects of the judging criteria?
4. Have you advised all partner agencies that you are submitting an entry for your project?
5. Have you adhered to the formatting requirements within the guidance?
6. Have you checked whether there are any reasons why your project should **not** be publicised to other police forces, partner agencies and the general public e.g. civil or criminal proceedings pending in relation to your project?
7. Have you inserted your project name as a footer note on the application form? Go to View-Header and Footer to add it.
8. Have you saved you application form as a word document and entitled your message '**Tilley 08 entry (followed by project name in brackets)**' before emailing it?

Once you are satisfied that you have completed your application form in full please email it to [Tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Tilleyawards08@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk). One hard copy must also be posted to Alex Blackwell at Home Office, Effective Practice & Communication Team, 4th Floor, Fry Building (SE Quarter), 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF and be received by 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008.