Literature Review

Paying the Price:

The Financial Impact of Imprisonment and Release

Dr Briege Nugent

March 2023

abrdn Financial Fairness Trust

families outside

supporting families affected by imprisonment

Contents

Key Findings………2

Introduction and Overview: Costs and Losses Through Imprisonment………………………………………4

Key Themes………5

The Deep and Pervasive Impact of Prison………………………………………………………………………………10

The Journey: From Remand to Post-Release……………………………………………………………………………11

Impact on Kinship Carers…………………………………………………………………………………………………17

The Pandemic……18

Losses Endured………20

Sources of Support………21

Looking to Other Jurisdictions for Recommendations………………………………………………………..22

Conclusion………23

References………24

Key Findings

- Almost ten years on from Dickie (2012), the financial impact of imprisonment on families in Scotland is still an under-researched area, and there has been no focused study carried out since this time.
- The numbers in prison in Scotland remain high and are from the poorest communities.
- Poverty is a political choice. After ten years of austerity and cuts to services, a pandemic, and cost of living crisis, there is growing, alarming evidence that families are facing more hardships than ever. One in six UK households (4.4 million) are now in serious financial difficulties, worse than any point during the pandemic, with an additional 1.6 million households in serious difficulty since October 2021 (Evans and Collard, 2022). 27% of children are now living in poverty in the UK. Figures for children in poverty across Scotland for each local authority range from one in eight children in East Dunbartonshire to one in three in Glasgow (Stone, 2022).
- Single parents and those earning under £10,000 per year have been especially affected. Inflation (at the time of writing) is now close to 10%, and families already surviving on very low incomes face devastating struggles to make ends meet (Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Save the Children, 2022). The worries parents face about putting food on the table and paying bills is described as a 'toxic brew' having an adverse impact on mental health (Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Save the Children, 2022).
- Poverty affects all aspects of life and the life course of individuals: it is a significant background factor inter-connected with substance misuse, mental health, adverse childhood experiences, abuse, and the pervasive role of violence (Bramley *et al*., 2019). Income support, even a small amount, early in a child's life can have a lasting impact and help them on a different long-term pathway (Cooper and Stewart, 2021).
- Connections and support can help mediate against the effects of poverty, but families affected by imprisonment can feel stigmatised and ostracised, preventing them from seeking help (Souza *et al*., 2020).
- The current social security system is inadequate, and having someone in prison puts families at risk of poverty, with prison compounding issues.
- 27,000 children in Scotland are estimated to experience a parent's imprisonment each year - more than those affected by divorce (Jardine, 2019).
- According to the most recent Scottish prisoner survey, 61% reported having a child. The most common forms of contact with family were telephone (58%), letter (57%) and visits (43%). Over half reported their visitors having problems when visiting them. The most common issue was around the distance to the prison (72%), lack of transport (65%), and the costs involved (57%). Just over a third of people held in prison were receiving visits from their children. A third had received help from the Family Contact Officer.
- Families are diverse and best understood by what they do together (Jardine 2019), and prison limits this.
- 95% of the prison population is made up of men, and a third come from the 10% most deprived areas in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2022). The burden of care and covering costs overwhelmingly falls to women.
- Family contact supports desistance, but it must also be recognised as a human right.
- The remand population has risen over the past ten years, and there are now close to 1 in 4 people in prison in Scotland on remand with 57% released after this period. Universal Credit only pays 26 weeks of rent during remand - half of what people had been entitled to before

emergency Covid provisions were imposed. People held in prison on remand are not prioritised to access work and do not access support or claim discharge grants in the same way as those sentenced. Loved ones can visit them every day. Families are under a lot of pressure during this time to fit these costs and to spend time with the person.

- The ‘obvious’ additional costs to families that prison causes, also noted by Dickie (2012), are telephone calls, visits, adding money to personal prison accounts, costs related to home leaves, and resettlement.
- Even ten minutes of phone contact a day is more than what many people held in prison earn in a week. Families have welcomed the 310 free minutes allocated to each person in prison a month introduced during lockdown. Looking to positive practice, in California all calls made from prison are now free (Washington Post, 2022).
- When women are in prison, they do not have access to the same support structures, and the costs to society are high when children are taken into care.
- Financial support for visits to families entitled to this is paid in arrears.
- The pandemic has highlighted the lack of information flows that exist between families and prisons, and families have felt forgotten.
- As a result of pandemic restrictions, families did not see their loved one for over a year, having a significant mental and physical impact on all involved.
- Video calls brought in during the pandemic are not accessible to families who are digitally excluded and/or without government-issued identification. Families from the poorest areas are more likely to be digitally excluded, and the Scottish Government has an aspiration to have an ethical digital Scotland that will ‘leave no one behind.’
- There is no publicly or readily accessible information on the costs of calls or emails to people in prison in Scotland.
- 31% of children in care are looked after by kinship carers, and many grandmothers take up the care of children affected by imprisonment. Kinship care payments across Scotland vary, and the system is difficult to navigate.
- Parents in prison are thirteen times as likely to have been unemployed than the general population, and a study in the US found that two-thirds of people who left prison five years on were still unemployed.
- Families already with so little are essentially doing with even less and/or getting into debt to meet the costs related to prison as well as suffering the loss of their loved one’s income. Some research shows that children as a result do not access activities, and in some extreme cases families even lost their home, or partners/mothers gave up their jobs because of a lack of childcare.
- There is limited research on the impact of families when the person is released. When someone leaves prison after a sentence, they are given a discharge grant, now raised to £77, and able to get a travel warrant, which is a pass so they can travel by rail or bus home, but for those who are released from remand, the discharge grant does not apply.
- This review strengthens the case for the need for this research to understand the costs but also the losses families incur as a result of imprisonment.

Introduction and Overview: Costs and Losses Through Imprisonment

Dickie (2012) observed that there had been much research on the social, health, and emotional impacts of imprisonment on families, but very little focused on the financial. His subsequent landmark study in Scotland included: a literature review; empirical research based on 24 families interviewed; and an analysis of data drawn from the Families Outside helpline. The study brought to light the financial **costs of imprisonment** through the cost of calls; visits with travel amounting to between £4-£30 each time; purchasing food at visits, with children viewing these as days out; significant amounts being paid into prison personal accounts which ranged from £3-£50 per week; the cost of postal orders or having to send post recorded delivery; home leaves with families unaware of the financial support available; costs of the person being at home on tag and of supporting them on release; and help with housing, getting the person's life back on track, making social work meetings or post-release supervision or programmes.

The study also spotlighted **the losses** family incur, reporting the drop in income from £50 to £300 per week; impact on individuals' ability to work; and impact on benefits, housing, with some even becoming homeless or having to move to smaller premises. The report also drew attention to grandparents who had taken on the role of kinship carer and the lack of wider data around this. It was starkly clear that women bore the brunt of costs. The effect was to tighten already tight budgets, and one-third reported taking out a loan and half relied on family support, which put pressure on relationships. The wider context described how people held in prison came from the most deprived areas in Scotland, and many families were dealing with other issues such as mental health, disability, and substance misuse.

At the time – 2012 - this study was carried out following the economic recession. Now ten years on, following a decade of austerity and ongoing pandemic, this literature review sets out what is known since this time about the costs of imprisonment to families. The literature will draw out the key themes, namely the impact of poverty, that women remain the population most affected, and then turns to 'walk' the journey from remand to post-release, outlining the financial costs and losses reported in the literature. Finally, a specific review of the emerging literature on the effects of the pandemic in relation to families and imprisonment will be outlined. It was notable that there remain significant gaps in knowledge even now, such as basic things relating to for example the costs of calls, emails, and how much people are given for discharge grants, and at present there is a void in relation to costs around resettlement. This review clarifies the extent to which this study is needed, but also that the stigma around both prison and poverty will present significant factors to people coming forward to be heard. It will be paramount that in publicising this research, it will be crucial to try to cut through this stigma and present this study as a chance for people to be heard and their voices reckoned with.

Poverty

Even before the pandemic, around a million people in Scotland were living in poverty (McCormick and Hay, 2020). The level of inequalities is also clear, with the top 10% of the population in 2016-2019 having 24% more income than the bottom 40% combined (Scottish Government, 2020). 19% of adults and 24% of children (230,000 children each year) were living in relative poverty after housing costs (Scottish Government, 2020). An estimated 65% of children in relative poverty after housing costs (150,000 children each year) were living in working households (*ibid*). Congreve (2019) explains how a 'poverty line' - that is, the level of income a household must exceed in order to avoid or escape poverty - is dependent on household composition. Specifically for example, in 2017/18, a household in Scotland with two adults and two children (under 14 years old) would have needed an income of £366 a week to leave poverty behind, while a household with a single adult and no children would have needed an income of £152 a week (*ibid*.). Cebula *et al*. (2021: 4) reflect that the 'biggest areas for immediate action are in the lack of an adequate social security system and difficultly in accessing work that provides enough income' and being in a household where no one works are the highest risks to families being in poverty.

The numbers of people in prison remain high and are drawn from the poorest communities (McVie and Matthews cited in Jardine, 2019). 34% of all arrivals in prison in Scotland come from the 10% of Scotland's most deprived areas, and 8.5% of entrants to prison are people who are homeless (Scottish Government, 2022). In a study of those on remand in Scotland, almost all said they earned below £6,000 a year (Long *et al*. 2021). Poverty perpetuates the cycle of incarceration as demonstrated by US research, which states that nearly 40% of all crimes are estimated to be directly attributable to poverty, and 80% are on a low income (deVuono-powell, 2015).

The impact of poverty and links to offending are further illustrated in research by the Scottish Children's Reporter (McGarrol *et al*., 2022). The study focused on 400 children aged 12-15 who had been referred because of their involvement in offending. The children's lives were described as being characterised by 'adversity, trauma, neglect, exposure to harmful behaviours by others, victimisation and exploitation (including criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation), often compounded by socioeconomic disadvantage' (*ibid*.: 4). The areas of concern raised were around educational attainment, well-being, substance use, self-harm and bullying. 63% of those referred came from the SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) quintiles 1 and 2, the most deprived areas in Scotland (*ibid*.). Around a quarter had reported self-harm or attempted suicide. Around half had used drugs and/or alcohol and reported being victims of parental neglect. Those who have been in care are vastly overrepresented in the criminal justice system, with a third of those under 21 in the prison system having this background (Scottish Prison Service, 2016). In the most recent prison survey from across the estate, 25% reported they had been in some form of care (Scottish Prison Service, 2019).

Alston, the United Nations Special Rapporteur, described poverty as 'a political choice' (2018: 22). At present, political focus is very much on the impact of Covid-19, and this has exposed levels of social inequality, but it is important not to forget that 10 years of austerity preceded this. This past decade marked cuts to statutory services, closure of community-based support, welfare reform, and housing insecurity which has led to more families experiencing destitution and more complex needs (Galloway, 2020). The impact of poverty is often under-reported because of the shame and stigma felt (Walker, 2014). Financial struggle pervades all aspects of people's lives. Research in Scotland shows that poverty is a significant background factor inter-connected with substance use, mental health, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), abuse and the pervasive role of violence (Bramley *et al*., 2019). Some people even reported becoming so desperate because of their housing situation and/or mental health that they offended to get access to help through the criminal justice system (*ibid.*). Universal credit was viewed as a 'nightmare' by both recipients and providers, with many needing help from voluntary sector agencies to get the benefits they were eligible for (*ibid.*).

Children and families living in poverty suffer greater health inequalities, such as higher levels of obesity and negative developmental impact on brain structure and formation impacting language, executive function and memory (NHS Scotland, 2018). Living in poverty affects the life course of children and families, putting them under additional strain and impacting adversely on mental, physical health and relationships (NHS Scotland, 2018). There is strong evidence that higher levels of household income have a positive effect on children's outcomes, in particular cognitive and schooling outcomes, as well as maternal mental health, parenting and the home environment (Cooper and Stewart, 2021; NHS Scotland, 2018). The poverty-related attainment gap starts in the early years and gets wider over time (Sosu and Ellis, 2014). Scotland has a highly segregated school system, with 80% of the top schools in the most advantaged areas (Robertson and McHardy, 2021). Pupils from the most deprived areas are four times more likely to be excluded from school than those from the most advantaged areas (*ibid.*).

Particular groups, such as children of lone parents, who have a family member in prison, disability, or are from an ethnic minority background, are at heightened risk of living in poverty, because of the lack of social support structures and discrimination they experience (Treanor, 2020; Cebula *et al*. 2021). An estimated 27,000 children in Scotland experience a parent's imprisonment each year, which is more than those who will experience divorce (Jardine, 2019). Families facing economic disadvantage are often pathologised, and unemployed and under-employed people held in the lowest esteem (Treanor, 2020). Social connections and support are highlighted in the literature as being important to mediate against the effects of poverty, and equally without them, people are more at risk of being in and staying in poverty (Treanor, 2020). These are really important points to consider in light of those affected by imprisonment, who through shame and stigma can also lose connections and be especially vulnerable to isolation (Souza *et al*., 2020; Pact, 2021). Families experiencing poverty report living in a permanent form of lockdown, unable to afford even the basics, let alone have a social life (Includem, 2021).

The poverty rate for young adults in Scotland was higher in 2014/15 than a decade ago (Scottish Government, 2018). Younger households are overrepresented in those most impoverished groups, which is driven by a reduction in home ownership, rising house prices, low pay, and insecure work, and they are more likely to live in private rented accommodation and at risk of homelessness (Scottish Government, 2018). Unemployment leads to a higher likelihood of long-term 'scarring' later in life in terms of employment, pay, life chances, and health (*ibid*.). Despite girls outperforming boys at school, women dominate low pay sectors and report having lower level of life satisfaction and a higher level of mental health issues that manifest earlier in adolescence (*ibid*.). There is also evidence that people with good qualifications from minority ethnic groups face greater barriers to finding work, and those who are disabled have higher rates of unemployment (*ibid*.). Again, these are significant points to recognise, particularly as the costs of imprisonment are shown to be borne predominantly by women, who as shown here are the most likely to be impoverished from the outset already.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2018) report on social mobility reinforces that social disadvantage is passed from one generation to another. They found that higher inequalities are directly related to lower social mobility, and that since the 1990s there has been a persistence of income positions at the bottom and at the top of the distribution. A more recent systematic analysis examining 54 studies from the EU and OECD highlights the entrenched nature of poverty and that in policy terms, money in itself makes a difference to children's outcomes (Cooper and Stewart, 2021). For child health, the period before birth is particularly important (*ibid.*). The authors conclude that this shows the potential for income support, even a small amount early in a child's life, to have a lasting impact and to help them on a different long-term pathway (*ibid.*) McKendrick and Brown (2018) caution against the positivity lauded around the resilience shown by people who live in poverty, contending that this has been forced upon them.

The Minimum Income Standard (MIS) is a vision of the standard of living that we as a society might consider that people should be able to achieve, with people having a degree of security and stability (Davis *et al*. 2021). It is described as including more than just food, clothes, and shelter, but also having the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society and to live in dignity. These include

things like being able to afford swimming lessons for children and going to the cinema and on holiday as a family. Based on the figures, a single person needs to earn £20,400 a year to reach the MIS level. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's (JRF) research into the Minimum Income Standard (MIS) for the United Kingdom in 2021 found that people are being held back by unstable markets and inadequate levels of income. During the pandemic, the Government's furlough scheme and increase in Universal Credit (UC) helped raise living standards, and JRF advised the Government to continue the £20 per week for people on Universal Credit to keep them out of poverty. Families out of work and on Universal Credit fall about 40% short of the income needed, and those without children are 60% short, to meet the MIS.

In February 2022, Parenting Across Scotland released a press release announcing findings from research carried out by Ipsos Scotland, based on 1,004 parents (Parenting Across Scotland, 2022). The study showed that nearly half of families in Scotland found it harder to manage even before the cost of living increases. The rise in inflation and increase in National Insurance Contributions was reported to cost families £1,000 per year, plunging them into further financial difficulties. Half of families said they were not able to save, and one in five had experienced a reduction in earnings. Lone parents in particular were vulnerable to financial difficulties. Satwat Rehman, Director of One Parent Families Scotland, called for the Government to increase benefits by 6% in line with inflation. Sally Ann Kelly, Chief Executive of the Aberlour Child Care Trust, said that the Urgent Assistance Fund had 100% more applications than the year before and that the cost-of-living crisis is pushing already struggling families over the edge.

A more recent report by Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and Save the Children (2022) highlights that inflation is now close to 10% and that families already surviving on very low incomes face devastating struggles to make ends meet. The report rightly notes that it is shameful that parents are having to go hungry themselves to feed their children in a country as wealthy as Scotland, alongside the stigma around food bank use. It describes the "toxic brew" of the everyday worries parents have about putting food on the table, constantly worrying about bills and the impact on mental health (Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Save the Children, 2022). The Scottish Government's Child Poverty Action Plan set out that the aim of reaching 18% relative poverty by 2023 and 10% by 2030, but it currently is 24% (Scottish Government, 2022b). The testimonies of 49 parents in the JRF and Save the Children (2022) report highlighted the inflexibility of childcare, work that discriminated those with caring responsibilities, the meagre support from social security, poor mental health, inaccessible services, and the cost of living prompting spending dilemmas so people had to 'freeze or eat.'

The Scottish Government's payment of £25 per week through Scottish Child Payment is a crucial lifeline. The authors call for the Government to bring the same urgency they did to the pandemic to end child poverty, to increase the Child Payment, to bring the labour market closer to parents, and target actions towards families, making mental health provision central. The authors promote the need for employment to be more accessible to parents and note that they are getting tired of repeating the same stories. Universal Credit was highlighted as being a complex system where parents are unclear of what support is available, and support falls short of private nursery costs and is paid in arrears, so families have to take on a financial burden. The majority (85%) of the social security system in Scotland is reserved to the UK Government. The report notes the five-week wait for support to commence; threat of sanctions; complexity of payment levels; tapering of benefits as other earnings increase; and the complexity of the system and deductions. These all make Universal Credit a difficult system which has had an adverse impact on the quality of peoples' lives.

Research commissioned by abrdn Financial Fairness Trust based on over 5,000 households shows that one in six UK households (4.4 million) are now in serious financial difficulties, worse than any point during the pandemic, with an additional 1.6 million households in serious difficulty since October 2021 (Evans and Collard, 2022). In response to the cost of living crisis, 71% reported that they had reduced the quality of food they ate, 60% avoided turning on their heating and 31% reduced their number of showers or baths. Single parents and those earning under £10,000 per year have been especially affected (*ibid*.).

A report by the Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact, 2012) notes that in comparison with the general population, parents in prison are thirteen times as likely to have been unemployed, two and a half times more likely to have had a family member convicted, six times as likely to have been a young father, and fifteen times as likely to be HIV positive. One in four children in poverty in Scotland, and children affected by imprisonment, are at increased risk of being in poverty (Child Poverty Action Group, 2021).

According to the most recent Scottish prisoner survey, 61% of people held in prison reported having a child under 18 (Carnie and Broderick, 2020). The most common forms of contact with family were telephone (58%), letter (57%) and visits (43%). Over half reported their visitors having problems when visiting them. The most common issue was around the distance to the prison (72%), lack of transport (65%) and the costs involved (57%). Other reported problems were due to location (41%), time limits (40%), and the stress of the visit (33%). Over a quarter reported issues with staff attitudes (27%). Just over a third (37%) were receiving visits from their children. A third had received help from the Family Contact Officer.
A study in Glasgow carried out by the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in 2015 brings to the fore the extent of digital exclusion, with 42% of respondents having never used the internet, and almost half did not have a computer or internet connection at home (Anders *et al.* 2015). 35% could not use a computer at all (*ibid*.). This research was carried out six years ago, but it is also important to reflect that at this time the authors emphasise the importance of public spaces as a way for people to access the internet. However, now more than ever this is becoming increasingly less likely with library closures and a lack of funding (Garavelli, 2021). Furthermore, a more recent study focusing on Glasgow and 15 deprived communities, which involved 3,805 individuals, Kearns and Whitley (2019) found that a third did not use the internet, and half only accessed it through their phone. They noted that the costs of broadband across the city varied from £17-£35 per month and phone contracts from £23-£46. The authors called for the Government to install the internet into homes or subsidise mobile phone data plans.

In April 2021, the Scottish Government published their digital strategy and set out an aspiration that an ethical digital Scotland will mean that people are able to access technology and develop the skills they need to thrive in this digital world. The Strategy states that 'We will bring the most vulnerable with us… ensuring no one is left behind the changes taking place" (Scottish Government, 2021: 24). The pandemic has accentuated and exacerbated long-standing inequalities, and those already vulnerable require particular attention to ensure the promotion and protection of their rights (Halton, 2020).

Even where budgets are extremely tight, families may feel they have little choice but to cover the costs related to prison, as these are a key way for families to remain in contact. Given that very little financial support is available to families, Barkas *et al*. (2020) and Jardine (2019) contend that it is important to consider the role of the criminal justice system seriously, and the prison in particular, in creating, sustaining, and deepening poverty amongst children and families.

Diversity and Complexity of Family

The literature points to a need for greater clarity about what is meant by family and the way family members that are connected (Christian, 2020). Families affected by imprisonment are not all the same, and it is important to think more broadly about who is defined as family to recognise diversity and also that not all family are outside of prison (Barkas *et al*. 2021, Jardine, 2019). The emphasis on the nuclear family is outdated and for example does not take account of the reality of the increase in 'blended' families (Jardine, 2019).

Jardine (2019) carried out over 300 hours of observation at HMP Edinburgh Visitors' Centre and conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with 10 men and 4 women serving a custodial sentence, 19 people from 14 families, 8 prison officers, and 4 members of the Visitors' Centre staff team. Her research highlights the diversity and complexity of families, and drawing on the work of Morgan (1996), that

families are about the things they 'do' together, such as for example eating. This work spotlights the importance of memories, traditions, and emotions and in turn how the prison and the criminal justice system create barriers to this.

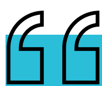
'Women's Work'

Men make up over 95% of the average daily population of people in prison in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2022). As well as drawing out the differences between families, studies show that the extra 'work' of caring for children, coordinating visits, and balancing budgets is disproportionately carried out by women (Jardine, 2019; Halsey and Deegan, 2015; deVuono-powell *et al*. 2015; Washington Corrections Watch, 2021). It is often wives, partners, mothers, girlfriends, and sisters, with one person taking on the bulk of the work (Jardine, 2019; Halsey and Deegan, 2015). In the US, the research also emphasises the role of women of colour (Washington Corrections Watch, 2021). Helplines in Scotland, England and Wales for families affected by imprisonment show that around 80% of calls are from women (Wainright and Harriott, 2018). Moreover, when women go to prison they do not get the same support as their male counterparts, but rather lose connections, so that the impact of prison to women is especially deeply damaging (Jardine, 2019; Batya *et al*. 2021).The cultural expectation that women will do the bulk of this caring work disadvantages women in prison (who may not have someone in the community to take on this role) and places a heavy burden on the women who do provide this support (Barkas *et al*. 2021) to 'stand by their man' (Jardine, 2019).

Human Rights

The role families play in supporting desistance from offending is commonly lauded (Wainright and Harriott, 2018; Jardine, 2019). The Farmer Report described families as the 'golden thread' and noted that good connections between families also reduce the likelihood of the person taking their lives in prison (Wainright and Harriott, 2018; Ministry of Justice, 2017). The estimated cost to the public purse of the 95 suicides that took place over the 12-month period to September 2015 in prison in England was estimated to be between £160m and £300m (*ibid*.). However, contact between families is not about desistance but should be about human rights to family life (Halton, 2020), but the reality is that families are often unaware of these rights (Condry and Scharff Smith, 2020). Although there is evidence of some prison officers being a good source of support (Jardine, 2018; 2019), the literature also repeatedly describes families as having an overwhelmingly negative relationship with the prison, experiencing 'prisonisation' and what Hutton (2018) refers to as 'legally sanctioned stigma' (cited in Condry and Scharff Smith, 2020).

Although the focus of this work is on the financial impact of prison, it would be remiss not to outline some of the research that shows the deep and pervasive impact of prison on families' lives. As summarised by Barkas *et al*. (2021: 5 and 6), drawing on five PhD projects in Scotland:



> Many families described experiencing hardships including (but not limited to): poor mental health, long-term illness, learning difficulties, exclusion from employment, poor experiences of education, histories of problem substance use/addiction, and unstable or low quality housing. Some participants also felt that they have been let down by professionals in the past… Across the projects families reported: significant disruptions to their home lives and child care arrangements (and sometimes consequently being forced to give up work), losing their homes, difficulties with benefit entitlements, damage to their mental health, feelings of being judged, and even being victimised in their communities.

Families describe the person going to prison as being like bereavement, feeling deep grief but also shame (Ottley, 2021). As observed by Jardine (2019), there is growing recognition that families affected by imprisonment experience a range of complex emotions, distress, financial strains, and difficulties with housing and childcare. Many are already experiencing high levels of poverty and have few resources with which to resist these pressures (Jardine, 2018). In written evidence submitted by Action for Prisoners' Families to the UK Parliament, it was reported that 22% of married people separate while in prison, and 45% of people held in prison lose contact with their families (cited in Yalavarthi, 2021). As yet, there is no current system for schools to identify children affected by imprisonment, and therefore these children are being 'missed' in terms of the extra support they could be receiving (Shaw *et al*. 2021). A recent report by Pact (2021) based on 15 families from across England found that families affected by imprisonment reported feeling isolated and would welcome peer support groups.

Costs of Imprisonment to Families – Estimates

There is no 'ball park' figure found about the cost of imprisonment in the UK. In November 2019, the Washington Office of the Corrections Ombudsman found that incarceration in Washington could cost an individual family $10,000 or more per year (Washington Corrections Watch, 2021). This can amount to the total household income for a family and force them into debt (deVuono-powell, 2015). Pact (2012) noted that while someone was in prison, some families lost their home, two-thirds their job, have increased financial problems and two-fifths lost contact with their family. Only 5% of children in the UK who previously lived with their mothers remain in their home following their mother's incarceration (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002 cited in Pact, 2012). A study in New Zealand found that during imprisonment, a family's income decreases by 22% (Martin, 2017), and the biggest cost is when a woman goes to prison.

The next section will present a review of the literature on the costs of imprisonment to families, focusing firstly on remand, to then when the person is sentenced, looking at the cost of phone calls, visits, video calls, emails, and paying into the Prisoner's Personal Cash account (PPC).

Court Costs

There is no evidence found in the UK related to court costs, but in the US, research suggests that low-income families are expected to absorb court costs that amounts to around $13,000 per case (cited in Yalavarthi, 2021). This may be an area for further research.

Remand

There has been a significant rise of people on remand in Scotland, with the delay in trials as a result of the pandemic causing the population to climb from 982 to 1,753 between April 2020 and April 2021 (Howard League Scotland, 2021; Armstrong *et al*. 2021). By the end of that period, close to 1 in 4 people held in prison in Scotland (23.9%) were on remand, and 42.6% of young people aged 16-20 in prison were on remand (*ibid*.). The median length of time spent on remand was 21 days, but longer lengths were recorded and have increased over the past ten years, whereby 120 days of time spent on remand accounted for 6% of the population this is now 17% (*ibid*.). Significantly, 57% of those on remand are found not guilty and go on to be released (*ibid*.).

Drawing on a group of 52 people in prison on remand, Parkhead Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in Glasgow published a landmark report highlighting the particular challenges faced by this population and the complicated benefit rules which make it so difficult for people to access what they are entitled to (Long *et al*. 2021). Of the 52, three-quarters said they were single, 13.5% married or co-habiting, and the remainder did not say; this reinforces the earlier point made for the definition of 'family' to be wide and inclusive.

During remand, the person can get support for mortgage interest but only if it is claimed by the person prior to them entering prison. Universal Credit will only pay rent for 26 weeks, which is much less than the 52 weeks people had been entitled to before (Long *et al*. 2021). Often this means that in effect families pay rent when the benefits run out. If the person in prison has a partner, they have to begin a claim on their own as an individual. This affects their benefits and, if not done promptly, can lead to overpayments and debts (Long *et al*. 2021). Partners also must take on all of the payment of Council Tax with only a 25% reduction. Partners also have to negotiate with the Department of Work and Pension (DWP) in relation to the payment of joint tenancies, and as these offices are open only during conventional working hours, this can also affect their work or other responsibilities.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is suspended after 28 days, and disability living allowance (DLA) and other disability benefits are suspended right away when the person comes into prison but can be backdated if they are found to be not guilty or get a community payback order (CPO) (Long *et al*. 2021). Most people on remand will have their National Insurance contributions stopped unless they were sick and receiving incapacity benefits before going to prison, which can affect their entitlements including retirement.

Child benefit can be paid to someone in prison on remand. A parent or young person on remand affects the family claims for universal credit with allowances for the child deducted. They also may be classified as having an under-occupied house and therefore liable for the so-called 'bedroom tax'.

It has been a long-recognised issue that people held in prison on remand are not obliged to work in prison and so do not make their own money or have access to education or support in the same way as those sentenced (Scottish Parliament, 2013; Justice Committee, 2018). In 2013, the Scottish Parliament noted concerns around people on remand not participating in case it was taken as a sign of guilt and called for this population to be given focused attention in the writing up of the strategy around purposeful activity. As described by the Justice Committee (2018: 1), 'The time there is largely unproductive and potentially damaging for the individual and their family." Without money in their account, those on remand cannot access the prison canteen to buy things such as toiletries and vape for E-cigarettes (Long *et al*. 2021). The Justice Committee (2018) noted that for young people, provision is especially poor. The Prison Rules entitle people held in prison to send one letter per week free, and people held on remand can get a visit every day which puts pressure on families to visit every day, and the research points to cases where this happens (Long *et al*., 2021; Jardine, 2019; Jardine, 2018).

Those on benefits who return home often lose their 'legacy benefit' such as housing benefit and have to apply for Universal Credit, and therefore are without any money for an average of five weeks, sometimes longer, which is the length of time it can take for the claim to take effect. An advance can be made, but effectively means that the person begins their new life in arrears (Long *et al*., 2021). People on remand do not get any benefits back-paid when they return home, having been found not guilty. At present, discretionary discharge grants by the Scottish Prison Service are not applicable to those on remand, unlike those who are sentenced. There are some discretionary payments that can be made through the Scottish Welfare fund, but the individual would need to be aware of these on release from court or prison.

The Parkland research also reports from interviews with Families Outside and The Croft prison visitors' centre that emphasise that families are hugely affected by remand through lost benefits and income from employment which can snowball into debt through missed rent, mortgage, and credit payments (Long *et al*., 2021).

Sentenced

When someone is sentenced, this can mean a loss of the person's income to their family, and they now become an expense, or "a job" (Christian, 2020: 86), in effect creating "economic havoc" for the family (Breen, 1995, cited in Christian *et al*., 2006: 445). These costs include (as will be discussed in more detail) transportation to prison visits, sometimes overnight stays, the cost of phone calls and sending the person money for their commissary account (*ibid*.) or 'Prisoners' Personal Cash account' (PPC), and buying them expensive clothes so they are not bullied (Jardine, 2019).

If a child goes into prison or detention, child benefit is paid to the person responsible for 8 weeks. If in receipt of Universal Credit for the child, this stops. Child tax credit continues to be paid to the parent or carer only if the child has not been sentenced to more than four months. Housing benefit may also be lost to the parent or carer if the child is likely to be absent for more than 52 weeks (CPAG, 2020).

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) has a *Prisoner Wage Earning Policy*, specifying rates of pay for various forms of purposeful activity. This ranges from £5 per week at the lower end of the pay scale to £18-£21 per week for those working in more demanding roles (Piacentini *et al*., 2018). There are also bonus schemes, while those who refuse to work or "who by their own actions make themselves unemployable" receive no payments (SPS, 2012 cited in Piacentini *et al*. 2018: 6). The low level of wages has been heavily criticised as 'pocket money' wages, with concerns raised about private industries profiting (Piacentini *et al*., 2018). The authors draw attention to Italy for example where the law is that people held in prison should be paid two-thirds of the national contract with deductions made for subsistence as well as paid holidays and social security (Weaver, 2016 cited in Piacentini *et al*. 2018). It is further reported by the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) that people in prison have a £20 limit a week that they can access from their PPC accounts.

In 2019, the Scottish Prison Service and Glasgow Caledonian University reviewed the prison policy on wages (Maycock and Gregor, 2020) This highlighted Italy, as above, and good practice in France where people in custody receive 20%, 25% or 33% of the minimum wage for service roles. In Norway and Finland, wages are around £5 a day, and rates of reoffending are low. The research in Scotland involved interviewing 31 people in custody. Overall, people were negative about the level of wages received, and consistent calls were made for these to be increased. The current low rate of pay was felt to devalue the work and undermine work ethics, and rates did not rise in line with inflation, so buying things from the canteen was costing more and more. Different levels of pay were reported in different prisons, and people in prison had not read the wages policy. £20 per week was a figure repeatedly mentioned as being fair, and there were some suggestions about the value of having a savings scheme. Interviewees reflected on the importance of family supplementing wages through PPC payments. The authors called for an immediate increase in prison wages of between £2 and £5 a week and to follow the example of France and Italy, to tie wage rates to the national minimum wage.

The Scottish Prison Services Wages Policy has not been updated since 2012. People serving short-term sentences and those on remand do not have the same priority to accessing work as others, and only if it is available. When someone held in prison is sick, in segregation or unemployed, they receive £5 a week, and those unable to work because of old age are entitled to £7 a week. The levels of pay cited in the wages policy range from £7 to £21 per week, and this is reserved for those who are in the Open Estate. Bonuses of a maximum of £12 can be paid to those in the workshops who are on around £10, for high output or quality. £5 extra can be paid for tasks that are deemed 'unpleasant', and an 'achievement bonus' of £1 can also be paid to those who achieve some form of accreditation. Those who refuse to work are given no payment, their in-cell TV can be removed and they are not allowed to access physical training during working hours. In 2023, the first time since 2012, in response to the cost-of-living crisis, the Scottish Prison Service increased all prison wages by £1 per week (Mann, 2023). This is half of the minimum amount suggested by the review. It was also reported that the most a person held in prison can earn in a Scottish Prison is £28 per week.

Cost of Calls

Until the pandemic, the only calls available to people held in prison were through telephones in the prison hall. These phone calls are paid for out of their private cash or wages, and costs are high. Limits on access to personal cash accounts mean calls in turn are limited, and reports about challenges in accounts being set up can mean calls are unable to be made in the early stages (Booth, 2020). According to research in England and Wales, calls to mobiles reported cost 13p at the weekend and 20p on weekdays (Prison Reform Trust, 2020). Booth (2020) reports that the 'PrisonPhone' initiative now in England and Wales means families have the opportunity to make calls to mobiles at the same cost the same as landlines, but the study also showed that awareness of this was limited. Research by the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) in 2018 reported that calls to a landline from prison costs 7p/min at peak times 8am-6pm Monday-Friday and 6p/min off-peak; to call a mobile phone at any time is 13p/min.

Families are often reliant on mobile phones, which can be twice as expensive to call, and ten minutes of phone contact each day costs more than what many people held in prison earn in a week (Jardine, 2019). It is worth noting that there is no publicly available literature from the Scottish Prison Service found on the specific cost of calls in Scotland.

Visits

A study in England and Wales in 2009 showed that the average distance from home for men in prison was 50 miles away and, for women, 60 miles (Champion and Edgar, 2013). US survey data reported that half are housed 101 to 500 miles away from home, and of the 1.3 million incarcerated parents, only

half are visited (Batya *et al*. 2021). Those already economically disadvantaged were the least likely to visit (*ibid*.). In a recent English study exploring the value of peer support for families, participants reported feeling shame and stigma, and 29% did not have access to digital engagement, showing that the challenges around visiting can be both mental and physical (Pact, 2021).

The Farmer Report noted that in the calls for evidence about support for families with someone involved in the criminal justice system, visits to prison had the most comments and were viewed as the biggest financial strain on families because of poor or non-existent public transport to prisons (Ministry of Justice, 2017). Families cited travel costs of £60 - £100 or more per visit, and others reported that they were only able to visit due to financial support from the Assisted Prison Visits (APV) scheme. However, it further stated that one survey conducted by the then National Offender Management Service (NOMS, now HM Prison and Probation Service) found that 38% of people held in prison and their visitors were unaware of the APV scheme (*ibid*.). Visits are also shown to be disruptive to children's bedtimes (Jardine, 2019), and because of the lack of privacy and suppression of feelings by people held in prison, can mean that despite all this effort, visits are difficult and do not constitute quality family time (*ibid*.). Jardine gives an example of a woman who participated in her research who had travelled 7 hours to get to a 30-minute visit and was shouted at by prison staff, which affected her confidence and perceptions of legitimacy. US survey data showed that families of fathers who had been drug-dependent used their time in prison to reconnect, whereas this was not the case for the female equivalents, who instead had little to no family contact (Batya *et al*. 2021).

Financial support for visiting someone in prison is accessible if the person is in receipt of income support, Job Seekers Allowance, pension credit, Universal Credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or health benefits on low-income grounds (CPAG, 2020). Assistance is normally given towards one visit every two weeks and up to 26 visits in a 12-month period. If someone cannot travel to the prison and back home in one day, a contribution to the costs of an overnight stay is considered (*ibid*.). Families are not reimbursed electronically, so this process is slow and importantly is paid in arrears, so families who do not have the money in the first place cannot make a visit (Cochran and Edgar, 2013).

Small changes could be implemented to improve families' experiences as visitors, such as expanding visiting hours, improving parking, and improving transport to prisons from larger urban centres (Cochran, 2020).

Video Calls

A survey carried out by Champion and Edgar in England and Wales in 2013 heard from all prison governors, and at that time 70% wanted to see digital technology used to enhance family ties for secure messaging, Skype, and video conferencing, and also to make it easier for foreign nationals to have engagement with family. Cochran (2020) notes that in terms of expenditure for the Prison Service, video calls are a cheap and cost-effective form of rehabilitation. Moreover, unlike programmes that require specialised training and financial costs, most prison facilities already have the physical and administrative infrastructures in place to facilitate these (*ibid*.). Although an unequal substitute for in-person visits, these can help to overcome practical barriers relating to distance and financial costs as well as removing risks of the introduction of contraband. However, video calls have not been without their challenges, with access restricted to 30 minutes, extremely sensitive to movement, and not suitable for very young children (Prison Reform Trust, 2020; Minson, 2021). The (then) Prisons Minister Lucy Frazer in England also said that, as yet, they did not know if the cost of this provision would be handed onto people in prison and their families (Prison Reform Trust, 2020). The overriding conclusion is that these should not replace face to face visits but instead be complementary, offering families more options of how they remain connected (Flynn *et al*., 2020; Ministry of Justice, 2017).

Emails

Emails have the benefit of being a common form of communication for children and also being quick and cheap (Champion and Edgar, 2013). There is limited published literature in this field, and Booth (2020) reports that 'Email-a-prisoner' initiatives provide families with an online letter-writing service for a small fee (30p for a 50-line message) (HMIP, 2016). It is further noted that most current provision however is only for one-way emails, and not all prisons have this facility. A message sent through 'Email a Prisoner' costs 40p per message according to the Scottish Prison Service's website.

Paying into the Prisoner's Personal Cash (PPC) Account

Dickie (2012) found that families feel pressure to pay into their loved one's PPC Account, and literature shows remains unchanged. For example, Jardine (2019) reported an example of one woman she met called 'Brooke' who was paying in £80-90 per week. Jardine (2019) also noted another example of three sisters all paying into their brother's PPC account, who was serving an indeterminate sentence. Jardine (2018) also related the case of 'Tracey' who put money into her partner's account but also money for him into those he was friends with in prison, because of the limits placed on how much can be added to an individual's PPC. Literature published by the Scottish Prison Service on the new online banking system set up as a result of Covid-19 allows families to add £50 to the person's account and no more, but it is not clear what the time scales are in terms of the limits on deposits (Scottish Prison Service, undated).

Buying Expensive Clothes

Jardine (2019) highlights that women in her study reported paying for expensive trainers and clothes because of a belief that otherwise their partners would be subject to bullying within the prison.

Home Leave

Dickie (2012) found families had costs related to someone being on home leave such as attendance at appointments or programmes. A family member can apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund if they have someone living with them on temporary release (CPAG, 2020), but they need to be aware of this resource. There has been no research found in relation to the costs of someone being home on Home Detention Curfew or of the level of awareness families have about support.

Resettlement

When a person in Scotland leaves prison after serving their sentence, they are entitled to a discharge grant and travel warrant. Prior to July 2022, if someone was under age 25 then the discharge grant was £58.03, and if they were over 25, it was £72.64. After July 2022, all age groups receive £77. A travel warrant - a pass for rail or bus travel - is also issued rather than cash. It is notable that for those who are travelling great distances back home, there is no provision for food.

There is a dearth of information about the costs of resettlement to families. In Scotland, people serving less than four years are not automatically entitled to statutory support. Therefore, when people leave prison, particularly those on short sentences, it is observed that there is a 'tragic dropping off' of support from services (Cheliotis and Kay, 2021; Liebling et al. 2019). Legislation allows for people leaving prison to make a claim for Universal Credit in advance of their release, but at the time of writing the legislation has not been enacted. As a result of the void in support for those leaving prison, families take up this role but lack the necessary resources (deVuono-powell, 2015). A longitudinal study involving over 1,000

couples in the US showed that families desperately wanted more support around resettlement, and particularly around employment and housing (Comfort et al. 2016). A US study involving 167 participants from across five states highlighted what is referred to as the 'concrete scarcity' of families and, in essence, men returning to nothing (Cheliotis and Kay, 2021). The paper emphasised the impact of neo-liberal policies in compounding poverty and the cycle of people from deprived areas going to prison for reasons related to poverty, completing their sentence, leaving prison to return to the same area and problems as before, reoffending and going back to prison again. Women in the study described the pressure to provide impossible welfarist roles and being the sole provider of support. Men reported wanting to regain their role as fathers, but with the stigma, barriers to employment, and subsequent economic impotence, they were unable and failed then to meet the cultural expectations they felt expected of them to be 'men'. The research also draws attention to the impact of poverty and strains which can also lead to domestic violence.

Research in New Zealand found that families' incomes decreased by 15% when a family member returned home from prison (Martin, 2017). La Vigne *et al.* (2004 cited in Weaver and Nolan, 2015) found that 59% of men in their study after leaving prison were receiving financial support from spouses, family members, or friends, and 88% were living with family members. 84% of people released from prison in Visher *et al.*'s study (2010 cited in Weaver and Nolan, 2015) were still living with family seven months after their release, and 92% received financial assistance. A US study across 14 states and involving 712 people who had left prison and 368 family members found that 66% were still unemployed or underemployed five years after leaving prison (deVuono-powell, 2015). Two-thirds of respondents' families helped them find housing (*ibid.*). Nearly one in five families faced eviction, were denied housing, or did not qualify for public housing once their family member returned (*ibid*.).

Insurancea

Dickie (2012) found that families simply could not afford insurance. Unlock (2017) reviewed 42 mainstream insurance providers in the UK and found great variation in how they asked about convictions. Many insurance companies broke the law by taking into account convictions that were 'spent', meaning that enough time had now passed so they no longer needed to be declared. None provided a quote when there were unspent convictions, and only one provider when called gave a quote, increasing the premium to five times the original amount.

Impact on Kinship Carers

Of the 13,022 children looked after in the community in 2020, 4,456 children were placed formally with kinship carers (31% of the total in 2020 compared with 20% in 2010) (Scottish Government, 2021). The observation made by Dickie (2012) that the number of children affected by imprisonment in kinship care is unknown still stands. As yet there has been limited empirical research into this area, but drawing on international research, the burden of care is shown to fall largely on grandmothers, having an adverse impact on their financial situation and health (Raikes *et al*. 2020). Jardine (2019) for example describes the case of 'Joanne', a grandmother who had to give up her job to care for her granddaughter when her daughter was in prison and lost three-quarters of her income and was also maintaining her daughter's tenancy.

Children in kinship care and carers are disproportionately more likely to be living in poverty, and financial support is greatly appreciated by carers and makes kinship care arrangements more likely to be successful (Gillies, 2015). Access to support and entitlements for kinship carers is complex (Gillies, 2015; Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), 2020). It can be complicated in terms of what support, either from the benefits system and/or from the local authority, might be available. Entitlements and potential sources of support can be affected by the basis of the kinship care arrangement, whether informal, formalised by the courts in the form of a kinship care order, or as a result of the child being looked after by the local authority. The interaction of all of these factors and the potential complexity of it all means that kinship carers can end up losing out and highlights the need for timely and accurate advice.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of families across the UK did not see their loved one in prison for over a year (Minson, 2021). There is also some indication that people held in prison may not even have been getting their letters, with the post affected (Maycock, 2021). The restricted prison regime meant that people were confined to their cells for 23 hours a day, and families reported their loved one having to choose between taking a shower or making a call (Minson, 2021). The lack of information from the prison to families throughout was stark (Amstrong *et al*. 2020; Barkas, 2020; Minson, 2021). Ottley (2021) reported that the only updates from one prison was through Twitter so that those digitally excluded did not know at all what was going on. SPS introduced 'virtual visits', referred to here as video calls, and mobile phones in June 2020. Minson (2021) notes that for access to video calls families needed to have the internet and government-issued photo identification, which acted as a barrier for those most marginalised.

People held in prison in Scotland were also allocated 310 minutes per month to a mobile phone (Barkas, 2020).[1] They reported logistical issues with the mobiles, such as for example one person in Barlinnie not being given the correct charger (*ibid*.). Restrictions on in-person visits (e.g. on numbers of visitors permitted) when they were once again allowed forced families to make impossible decisions such as which child should stay at home, and this also meant in some cases that they had the added cost of providing childcare for those remaining (*ibid*.). Video calls being only during school hours meant school-aged children were unable to attend. Some people were deprived of contact because of technological issues, signal problems, and digital exclusion (Ottley, 2021; Armstrong *et al*. 2020). There was also a suggestion that over this time the costs of the canteen had risen (Maycock, 2021), and with people held in prison unable to work, this may have also put families under increased pressure to give more money to the PPC account.

Research carried out by the University of Glasgow to explore the impact of lockdown included hearing from families affected by imprisonment (Armstrong *et al*. 2020). They reported that families felt like 'dirt, as worthless, or being forgotten', and the anxiety revealed was multi-directional (Armstrong *et al*. 2020: 58). Minson (2021) carried out research between April and June 2020 hearing from 35 adult caregivers from across the UK affected by imprisonment, all of whom were women from low-income households with care of 71 children, eight of whom had a mother in prison, and 5 had both parents in prison. The study found that children did not always understand why contact had stopped and blamed themselves, and the impact of the loss of contact was likely to be long-term, affecting resettlement. Young children did not recognise their parent's voice, and there was a loss of attachment, which in turn was distressing for the person in prison and wider family. Families' mental and physical health was affected (Halton, 2020). Minson (2021) reports families having increased anxiety, depression, self-harm, onset of eating disorders, sadness and grief, weight loss, difficulty eating and sleeping, being quiet, withdrawn, having nightmares, verbal and physical abuse, destroying property, and children bedwetting and being clingy. Some children would not sleep alone or were sleeping with a picture of the parent in prison. Barkas (2020) described cases of families being 'doubly hit', such as one woman who had a health condition, lost her full-time job, was confined to the house with her two children, was making a claim through Universal Credit, and found the lack of contact with her partner hard to bear.

Minson (2021) reflects on the differences within the UK, whereby for example from the beginning of the pandemic in Northern Ireland families were getting free fortnightly calls. Halton (2020) stresses the needs of families for the provision of free telephone calls, video calling, emailing and instant messaging, and free or subsidised postal contact, so that contact could be frequent and flexible to minimise anxiety. Good practice in this area was noted in HMP Altcourse, where there was a Covid-19 family support line.

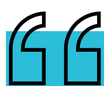
[1] Information also noted in ttps://insidetime.org/a-scottish-prisoners-set-to-keep-mobile-phones/

Service providers reported that specific issues relating to family contact with a loved one in prison during lockdown compounded other problems, such as financial insecurity, digital exclusion and access to support services (Barkas, 2020). There was an increased demand for support in communities (*ibid*: 59), but these are poorly or precariously funded. Overall, the institutional response was shown to produce increased feelings of isolation and created new strains on families' relationships with prisons. There has been no research as yet carried out to explore the specific costs to families over this time because of the imprisonment.

The costs incurred because of prison have meant that families, most already living on little, are doing with less or without. A US study that involved 19 family members affected by imprisonment shows that the integration of prison into daily family life required the need to balance competing demands or involved constant tradeoffs (Christian *et al*. 2006). Families who live in poverty are forced to divert resources from other needs such as paying mortgage/rent, food, utility bills, phone bills, child care, transportation, and building up savings to cushion against economic difficult times which the majority of low-income households face (*ibid*.). As the authors observed, the majority of families of people in prison do not have the income to support the real cost of their own living, let alone subsidise a family member in prison (*ibid*.). The research further emphasised that the family may actually lose social capital, that is, the loss of connections and opportunities because of their obligations towards their loved one in prison.

King's (2002) study involved 26 people held in prison and 19 caregivers, and the researchers held informal discussions with children, childcare workers, visitor centre staff, people with convictions, and probation and prison officers. They found that 65% of respondents reported a worsening of their financial circumstances, which affected the children's participation in various activities. Similar findings were also found in a more recent Australian study so that the direct effect of financial impact as a result of prison is that it creates social exclusion with children unable to engage in conventional social activities (Besemer *et al*. 2018).

Jardine (2019) also notes the case of 'Sophie', who instead of paying off her debts was paying into her partner's PPC account. Further, it is recognised that the time spent on visits, calls, waiting to hand in property, shopping for their partner's clothes, can mean a loss of other opportunities, or having the ability to spend time as one chooses (Jardine, 2018), with visits also booked by the people held in prison, so it is on their terms.



> Imprisonment not only deepens social marginality, but it also *reinforces* gendered inequality by reducing the time and resources these women are able to dedicate to their own goals and pursuits. (Jardine, 2019: 83)

Jardine (2018) describes the other challenges these women have to deal with whilst fulfilling these responsibilities, such as for example looking after very young children or being pregnant.

Dickie (2012) and Jardine (2019) note cases of people becoming homeless because of their partner going to prison, but there is no wider data about this.

Sources of Support

Women affected by imprisonment of a loved one rely on personal networks for emotional, financial, and childcare support, but also because of the imprisonment they risk losing these connections too (Souza *et al*. 2020). Souza *et al*. (2020: 217) reflected that while the men's absence created practical problems such as financial deprivation and increased parental duties, 'most women's concerns were focused on *him* and the *children's* needs as opposed to her own. This subsequently correlated with a decline in her health'. Families Outside is the only national charity that works solely on behalf of children and families in Scotland affected by imprisonment. In 2019/20, they received over 2,600 calls to their helpline and provided direct support to over 600 families and set up 28 peer groups (Families Outside, 2020). Over the pandemic they have seen a 51% increase in the number of calls to their helpline about families worried about the mental health of the person they love in prison.

Looking to Other Jurisdictions for Recommendations

Across the world there are different rules regarding contact for families, for example in Denmark and parts of the USA entire families can visit overnight (Condry and Scharff Smith, 2020). In the USA, in Washington State families can come for extended visits and share a meal together (Washington Corrections, 2021). The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the USA's equivalent of Office of Communications (OfCom), placed an interstate rate cap on phone companies, lowering the cost of calls (deVuono-powell, 2015). There are widespread disparities in the USA between what different states charge inmates to make a 15-minute call (Barr, 2022). Over the past three years, costs of calls have rocketed, with the industry costing families nearly $1 billion a year (*ibid*.). The FCC has called for these 'predatory rates' to end (*ibid*.). In September 2022, Gavin Newson, the Governor of California, signed a law making all phone calls from state prisons free, with the Washington Post urging others states and Congress to follow California's example (Washington Post, 2022). From the beginning of the pandemic, Northern Ireland gave people in prison a free video call every week. In Scotland, all people held in prison now have their own mobile cell and a free 310 minutes per month to speak to families. These are small but significant changes to families.

Looking to other fields, in terms of support for children, local councils can award extra funding to schools for children of parents serving in the armed forces (Ottley, 2021). This can help schools support the children through the periods of time their serving parent must be away and the upheaval it causes (Ottley, 2021).

Jardine (2019) recommends that families be offered high quality supports in their own rights and these to be tailored to specific groups, not just to accept gendered dynamics but encourage men to take a greater role in family life. In line with the UN Bangkok Rules 2010 she further calls for courts to consider family arrangements and, for example, allow the sentenced person to return home and get childcare sorted before going to prison. In Jardine's research, Visitor Centres emerged as important spaces for providing families support, connection, and fostering a sense of community (*ibid*.). Taking seriously the idea that families are about what they do, it is crucial that families affected by prison are enabled to share experiences together, such as a meal or even going on family days out (*ibid*.). The backdrop to this however is that Scotland has one of the highest rates of imprisonment in Europe and there is a need to reduce the prison population. Furthermore, the current use of remand - with more than half of those remanded in Scotland actually being released without a prison sentence or as 'time served' - is not sensible, sustainable, or warranted.

Conclusion

Almost ten years on from Dickie (2012), the impact of financial imprisonment on families in Scotland – and indeed in the UK more broadly - has remained an under-researched area. No focused study has been carried out since this time, and much still remains unknown. Even basic information such as the actual current costs of calls, emails, and entitlements such as discharge grants are not publicly or readily available to families. Furthermore, there is a dearth of information related to costs families take on related to legal costs, home leaves, home detention curfews, parole, and the whole area of resettlement. As yet, there has been no large-scale quantitative research exploring any of this area, and so the true scale of the problem again remains unknown. It could be argued that the past ignorance has made it all too easy for the problem to therefore remain unchallenged. Reflecting on the similar predicament of families of people in prison in the US, Yalvarthi (2021: 4) described this population as the 'overlooked victims of the US justice system.'

Dickie (2012) published his research following the financial crisis, and now after ten years of austerity and a pandemic, more families with a member in prison are experiencing extreme poverty and some facing destitution. The current social security system is inadequate, and having a family member in prison puts families that were previously secure at risk of being in poverty, and families that were already living poverty into deeper poverty, with prison and the costs involved compounding issues. The impact of poverty is pervasive, affecting all aspects of life, the life course and future generations. The Minimum Income Standard (MIS) highlights that having a life and dignity is about more than just food, shelter, and clothes, but also about accessing opportunities and choices, and feeling included and able to participate in society (Davis *et al*., 2021). As it stands, families living in poverty are far from meeting this standard.

An estimated 27,000 children in Scotland each year experience a parent's imprisonment, and the burden of care and costs have overwhelmingly fallen to women. It is also notable that when women go to prison, they do not have the same support structures as men and for example, and the cost to society is higher as children are more likely to be taken into care. This highlights that the costs to families for men and women held in prison may be very different, and at present the literature does not touch at all on the costs to families of a young person being in prison. In Scotland, as HM & YOI Polmont remains the only national facility for young men, this will be important to understand for the study.

The work of Jardine (2019) compellingly argues that families are recognised as diverse and best understood by what they do together, and the prison limits this. 'Walking' through the journey from remand to post-release, the pressure families feel at different stages and mounting costs become more obvious, but actually in terms of detail, there has been no focused study carried out since this time.

Over the pandemic, families did not see their loved one in prison for over a year. Video calls require families to have the internet and government-issued identification, and for those digitally excluded, this is not possible. The observation raised by the former Minister of Prisons in England also about these costs being passed down to people held in prison and their families raises concerns.

As well as the costs incurred, there are also losses, such as the loss of income, change in benefits, and in some cases even the loss of home. The impact on grandparents is also significant if they take up the role of kinship carer. There is also the loss of time and social capital, with the time spent at prison by families meaning missing opportunities, education, training, employment, building connections in the community, or frankly just having some individual time and space, as we all deserve to do. The effect of all of this is that families already trying to make do with very little are having to manage with even less or without, and/or getting into debt to meet these costs. This literature review highlights the need for this research to give voice to families and understand more fully the costs and losses incurred, and what they think needs to happen and change to make their lives and others better. As stated from the outset, these pillars of stigma, poverty, and prison will be a challenge to break, but the shame families carry is not theirs.

References

Alston, A. (2018) *Statement on Visit to the United Kingdom, by Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.* Available online at: https://www.ohchr.org/documents/issues/poverty/eom_gb_16nov2018.pdf

Armstrong, S. Pickering, L. Bunn, C. Brooks-Hay, O. Burman, M. Burns, N. Davis, A. Gormley, C. McNeill, F. Mirza, N. Mulvey, G. Norberg, I. Piacentini, T. Robinson, J. Saunders, K. Schinkel, M. Watson, N. Wiseman, P. Barkas, B. Casey, R. Cornish, N. Gilmour, M. Pearson, P. Reed, D. Ptolomey, A. Shaw, A. (2020) *Left Out and Locked: Impacts of Covid-19 Lockdown for Marginalised Groups in Scotland*. Glasgow: University of Glasgow.

Anders, G. Gijon, C. and Whallyer, J. (2015) Internet Access in Glasgow's Deprived Areas. Glasgow: Citizens Advice Scotland.

Barkas, B. (2020) *Why have we been forgotten? What lockdown is like for prisoners' families. Research Briefing*. Available online at: https://scotlandinlockdown.co.uk/2020/12/17/why-have-we-been-forgotten- what-lockdown-is-like-for-prisoners-families/

Barr, L. (2022) Congress passes bill to cap 'predatory' prison phone calls. *abcNews,* 28th December. Available at: https://abcnews.go.com/US/congress-passes-bill-cap-predatory-prison-phone-calls/story?id=95892808

Batya Y. Rubenstein, Elisa L. Toman & Joshua C. Cochran (2021) "Socioeconomic Barriers to Child Contact with Incarcerated Parents," *Justice Quarterly*, 38(4): 725-751, DOI: 10.1080/07418825.2019.1606270

Besemer, Kirsten L., and Susan M. Dennison. 2018. "Social Exclusion in Families Affected by Paternal Imprisonment." *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 25(2): 1–18.

Booth, N. (2020) "Disconnected: Exploring provisions for mother–child telephone contact in female prisons serving England and Wales," *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 20(2), pp. 150–168. doi: [10.1177/1748895818801806](10.1177/1748895818801806).

Bramley, G., Fitzpatrick, S., Wood, J., Sosenko, F., Blenkinsopp, J., Littlewood, M., Frew, C., Bashar, T., McIntyre, J. and Johnsen, S. (2019) *Hard Edges Scotland, Edinburgh*: Heriot-Watt University, I-SPHERE; LankellyChase; The Robertson Trust, https://lankellychase.org.uk/resources/publications/ hard-edges-scotland/

Carnie, J. and Broderick, R. (2020) *Scottish Prison Survey 2019*. Available online at: http://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Publications/Publication-7196.aspx

Cebula, C. Birt, C. Hay, D. Evans, J. (2021) *Poverty in Scotland 2021*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Champion, N. and Edgar, K. (2013) *Through the Gateway: How Computers Can Transform Rehabilitation.* London: Prison Reform Trust.

Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) (2018) *Family Contact and the Cost of Phone Calls from Prison*. Available at:

https://www.cycj.org.uk/family-contact-and-the-cost-of-phone-calls-from-prison/

Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland (2021) *Financial help for families affected by imprisonment.* London: Child Poverty Action Group.

Christian, J. Mellow, J. and Thomas, S. (2006) "Social and economic implications of family connections to prisoners." *Journal of Criminal Justice*. 34: 443-452.

Cochran, J. (2020) "Inmates Social Ties, Recidivism, and continuing Questions about Prison Visitation" in Hutton, M. and Moran, D. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Prison and the Family.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, Pp. 41-64.

Comfort, M. McKay, T. Landwehr, J. Kennedy, E. Lindquist, C. and Bir, A. (2016) "The costs of incarceration for families of prisoners." *International Review of the Red Cross*, 98 (3), 783–798. doi:10.1017/S1816383117000704

Condry, R. and Scharff Smith, P. (2020) "A Holistic Approach to Prisoners' Families – From Arrest to Release" in Hutton, M. and Moran, D. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Prison and the Family.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, Pp. 99-118.

Congreve, E. (2019) *Poverty in Scotland*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Cooper, K., Stewart, K. (2021) Does Household Income Affect Children's Outcomes? A Systematic Review of the Evidence. *Child Indicators Research,* 14: 981–1005. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-020-09782-0

Cheliotis, L. and McKay, T. (2021) "Uneasy partnerships: Prisoner re-entry, family problems and state coercion in the era of neoliberalism." *Punishment and Society.* 1-23

Christian, J. (2020) "Who are Prisoners' Family Members? Towards a Holistic and Intersectional Framework" in Hutton, M. and Moran, D. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Prison and the Family.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, Pp. 81-98.

deVuono-powell, S. Schweidler, C. Walters, A. and Zohrabi, A. (2015) *Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families.* Oakland, CA: Ella Baker Center, Forward Together, Research Action Design.

Evans, J. and Collard, S. (2022) *Under Pressure: The Financial Wellbeing of UK Households in June 2022*. Bristol: University of Bristol. Available at: https://www.financialfairness.org.uk/docs?editionId=e2e69bf8-2b51-4ee1-bf44-a53df25cc775

Davis, A. Hirsch, D. Padley, M. and Shepherd, C. (2021) *A Minimum Income Standard for the United Kingdom in 2021*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/minimum-income-standard-uk-2021

Dickie, D. (2013) *The Financial Impact of Imprisonment on Families.* Edinburgh: Families Outside.

Families Outside (2020) *Impact Report 2019-2020*. Edinburgh: Families Outside.

Flynn, C. Bartels, L. Dennison, S. Taylor, H. and Harrigan, S. (2020) "Contact experiences and needs of children of prisoners before and during COVID-19: Findings from an Australian survey." *Children and Family Social Work*, 1-12, https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12873.

Galloway, S. (2020) *Challenges from the Frontline – Revisited*. Edinburgh: Barnardo's Scotland and NSPCC Scotland. Available at: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2402/challenges-frontline-revisited-adversities-scotland.pdf

Garavelli, D. (2021) "Support our Libraries: Closures, funding and Covid recovery in Scotland," 29 August, *The Scotsman*, available at: https://www.scotsman.com/education/support-our-libraries-closures-funding-and-covid-recovery-in-scotland-3363558

Gillies, A. (2015) *Coping with complexity: financial support for kinship carers in Scotland*. London: Child Poverty Action Group. Available at: https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/CPAGScot-policy-coping-with-complexity-June15.pdf

Halsey, M., Deegan, S. (2015). *Young offenders: Crime, prison and struggles for desistance.* London, England: Palgrave Macmillan

Halton, L. (2020) *Covid-19 and the Rights of Children of Parents who are Incarcerated: Impacts and Recommendations*. Child Rights Connect Working Group on Children of Incarcerated Parents, co-convened by QUNO and Plataforma NNAPEs, and supported by Penal Reform International. Available online at: https://quno.org/sites/default/files/resources/Covid19-and-CIP%20%28004%29.pdf

Howard League Scotland (2021) *The Scandal of Remand in Scotland: A Report by Howard League Scotland – May 2021*. Available online at: http://howardleague.scot/news/2021/may/scandal-remand-scotland-report-howard-league-scotland-—-may-2021

Includem (2021) *Living in Poverty: A Form of Permanent Lockdown*. Glasgow: Includem.

Jardine, C. (2018). "Eroding legitimacy? The impact of imprisonment on relationships between families, communities and the criminal justice system." In R. Condry, & P. Scharff Smith (Eds.), *Prisons, Punishment and the Family: Towards a New Sociology of Punishment* Oxford University Press. PP. 167-180.

Jardine, C. (2019) *Families, Imprisonment and Legitimacy: The Cost of Custodial Penalties. Oxford: Routledge.*

Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Save the Children (2022) *Delivering for Families*? Available online at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/delivering-families

Justice Committee (2018) *An Inquiry into the Use of Remand in Scotland* Available at: https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/J/2018/6/24/An-Inquiry-into-the-Use-of-Remand-in-Scotland/JS052018R07.pdf

Kearns. A. and Whitley, E. (2019) "Associations of internet access with social integration, wellbeing and physical activity among adults in deprived communities: evidence from a household survey." *BMC Public Health*, 19, 860 https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7199-x

Liebling, A., Laws, B., Lieber, E., Auty, K., Schmidt, B.E., Crewe, B., Gardom, J., Kant, D., Morey, M. (2019). "Are Hope and Possibility Achievable in Prison?" *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice.* 58(1), pp.1-23.

Long, G. Kyle, K. and Henshaw, C. (2021) *Inside Information: A report on the work of the Parkhead Citizens Advice Bureau with prisoners on remand in Barlinnie Prison.* Citizens Advice Bureau

Martin, E. (2017) "Hidden Consequences: The Impact of Incarceration on Dependent Children," *NIJ Journal* 278. Available at: https://nij.gov/journals/278/Pages/impact-of- incarceration-on-dependent-children.aspx.

Maycock, M. (2021). "'I Do Not Appear to Have had Previous Letters'. The Potential and Pitfalls of Using a Qualitative Correspondence Method to Facilitate Insights into Life in Prison During the Covid-19 Pandemic." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods.* https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211047129

Mann, G. (2023) CON OF LIVING CRISIS: Prisoners to get 20 per cent pay hike – higher than raise offered to cash-strapped teachers and medics. The Sun, 15th January, available at: https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/10066633/prison-chiefs-give-inmates-cost-of-living-payrise/

Maycock, M. and McGregor, D. (2020) Prison Wages Research Project. Edinburgh and Glasgow: Scottish Prison Service and Glasgow Caledonian University.

McGarrol, S. Henderson, G. Deacon, K. McNiven, G. Baird, N. and Cairns, C. (2022) Children aged 12 to 15 years involved in offending and referred to the Children's Reporter and Procurator Fiscal in Scotland. Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and the Scottish Government. Available online at: https://www.scra.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Children-aged-12-to-15-years-offending.pdf

Minson, S. (2021) *The impact of COVID-19 prison lockdowns on children with a parent in prison*. Oxford: University of Oxford.

McCormick, J. and Hay, D. (2020) *Poverty in Scotland 202*0. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

OECD (2018) *A Broken Social Elevator? How to Promote Social Mobility*. Brussels: European Union.

Parenting Across Scotland (2022) Media Release: "Nearly half of families in Scotland finding it harder to manage even BEFORE the cost-of-living increases." Available online at: https://www.parentingacrossscotland.org/media/1514/costoflivingincrease-parenting-across-scotland.pdf

Piacentini, L. Weaver, B. and Jardine, C. (2018) *Employment and Employability in Scottish Prisons: A Research Briefing Paper, Feb 2018*. Glasgow: Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research.

Prison Advice and Care Trust (2012) *Troubled Families Affected by Imprisonment.* London: Pact.

Prison Reform Trust, Inquest, and Pact (2019) *Keeping People Safe in Prison: The Failure of Communication Systems.* London: Prison Reform Trust, Inquest and Pact.

Prison Reform Trust (2020) *CAPPTIVE: Covid-19 Action Prisons Project: Tracking Innovation, Valuing Experience*. London: Prison Reform Trust.

Raikes, B. Asiminei, R. Nathaniel, K. Awich Ochen, E. Pascaru, G. and Seruwagi, G. (2020) "A Holistic Approach to Prisoners' Families – From Arrest to Release" in Hutton, M. and Moran, D. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Prison and the Family*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 99-119.

Robertson, L. and McHardy, F. (2021) *The Poverty-related Attainment Gap: A review of the evidence*. Glasgow: The Poverty Alliance and the Robertson Trust.

Scottish Government (2020) *Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2016-19.* Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Scottish Government (2021) *Children's social work statistics: 2019 to 2020*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Scottish Government (2022) *Scottish Prison Population 2020-21*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2020-21/pages/10/

Scottish Government (2022b) *Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022-2026 - annex 6: what works - evidence review.* Edinburgh: Scottish Government. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/annex-6-evidence-review-works/pages/1/

The Scottish Parliament (2013) *Justice Committee 5th Report, 2013 (Session 4): Inquiry into purposeful activity in prisons*, Edinburgh: Scottish Parliament. Available at: http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_JusticeCommittee/Reports/jur-13-05w.pdf

Scottish Prison Service (undated) *Sending Money to People in Custody during Covid-19*. Edinburgh: Scottish Prison Service.

Scottish Prison Service (2012) *Prisoner Wage Earner Policy*. Edinburgh: Scottish Prison Service.

Scottish Prison Service (2016) *Prisoner's Survey 2015 – Young People in Custody.* Edinburgh: Scottish Prison Service.

Scottish Prison Service (2019) *Prison Survey 2019*. Edinburgh: Scotrish Prison Service.

Shaw, S. Woods, K. and Ford, A. (2021) "How can children of imprisoned parents in the UK be supported in school?" *Pastoral Care in Education*, DOI: 10.1080/02643944.2021.1977987

Sosu, E. and Ellis, S. (2014) *Closing the attainment gap in Scottish education*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/closing-attainment-gap-scottish-education.

Souza, K. Lanskey, C. Markson, L. and Losel, F. (2020) "Partners of Incarcerated Men: Questioning Caring Stereotypes" in Hutton, M. and Moran, D. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Prison and the Family.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 203-228.

Stone, J. (2022) *Child Poverty Across the UK*. End Child Poverty Coalition. Available online at: https://endchildpoverty.org.uk

Treanor, M. (2020) *Child Poverty: Aspiring to Survive.* Bristol: Policy Press and Bristol.

Unlock (2017) *Insurance providers and criminal records*. Kent: Unlock.

Wainwright, L. and Harriott, P. (2018) *The Golden Thread: Evaluation of the Pact Helpline for the families of prisoners and people in prison*. London: Prison Reform Trust and Pact.

Walker, R. (2014) *The Shame of Povert*y. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yalvarthi, A. (2021) *Incarceration in America: Cost to Immediate Families of the Incarcerated*, Academia Letters.

Washington Corrections Watch (2021) *Punishing Relations*. Washington: Washington Corrections Watch. Available at:

https://washingtoncorrectionswatch.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/punishing-relations-e28093-how-wa-docs-hidden-costs-and-collateral-damage-imprison-families-2.pdf

Washington Post (2022) 'California made prison phone calls free. Others should follow.' *Washington Post*, 17th October. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/10/17/free-prison-phone-calls-california/

Weaver, B. and Nolan (2015) *Families of Prisoners: A Review of the Evidence.* Glasgow: CYCJ. Available at:

https://www.cycj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Families-of-Prisoners-A-Review-of-The-Evidence-FINAL.pdf