

National Visitors' Centre Roadshow Evaluation



2023



**families
outside**

supporting
families affected
by imprisonment

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Introduction



Welcome to the first National Evaluation Report of the 2023 National Prison Visitors' Centre Roadshow Event.

Families Outside are funded by the Scottish Government to employ the National Lead for Prison Visitors' Centres in Scotland to oversee the core grant funding for Visitors' Centres. The National Performance Framework for Prison Visitors Centres in Scotland can be accessed here –

https://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/content/uploads/2017/06/Nat_Perf_Frame_VCs.pdf

The National Lead, up until this year, has overseen the coordination of the National Visitors' Centre Conference, however in 2023, with approval from the National Prison Visitors Centre Steering Group (NPVCSG) and supported by the 9 independent providers of Visitors' Centres, provided support for events to be organised at individual Visitors' Centres across Scotland: the National Roadshow Event.

If you have any feedback on this report please contact the National Lead, Jennifer Ferguson, Jennifer.ferguson@familiesoutside.org.uk

WHEN

Events were scheduled at 10 Visitors' Centres across Scotland. There was no event at HMP Cornton Vale due to an imminent move into HMP Stirling and HMP Inverness due to staffing changes.

	Date	Visitors' Centre AM	Visitors' Centre PM
WEEK 1	6th June		Perth
	7th June	Addiewell	
	8th June		Barlinnie
WEEK 2	12th June	Low Moss	Kilmarnock
	15th June	Polmont	
WEEK 3	23rd June	Shotts	
WEEK 4	29th June	Glenochil	
JULY	25th July	Edinburgh	
SEPTEMBER	20th September		Grampian

PLANNING

Discussion for the event started in November 2022 at the NPVCSG meeting where all Prison Visitors' Centre Providers agreed to organising local events at individual Centres as opposed to the annual national conference.

The purpose of the events was to raise awareness at a local level of the Centre with the flexibility for the Providers to target families, prison officers, MSPS, and or community groups.

Planning, peer support and organising continued at the monthly 'Manager Zoom Meetings' and March 'Manager Away Day' facilitated by the National Lead and attended by all Centre Providers.



The Events Coordinator at Families Outside sent each provider a personalised local invite template in February 2023 like the one below which could be used by them to invite individuals and organisations to their event.

A 'Local Invite List Suggestions' list was produced in consultation with the Centre managers and distributed to all providers by the National Lead (Appendix 1)

It was agreed at the March Away Day that the local invites were to be distributed by the Centre provider unless they agreed with the Events Coordinator to provide a list of names/emails of the people to distribute an invite too. It was agreed by the Coordinator that she would distribute these local invites if a list was provided to her by April. She agreed to state in the email to RSVP to the manager so that they could track numbers/names.

@HMPJustVisiting

Scottish Prison Visitors' Centre Roadshow

HMP Perth Visitors' Centre

WELCOME
HMP Perth
Visitors' Centre

CROSS REACH providing a caring future

Join us for an open door event to celebrate the work of
Scotland's Prison Visitors' Centres

Methods of Promoting the Roadshow Event



The Communications team at Families Outside produced the following images that could be used by the Visitors' Centre provider and were also used by Families Outside to advertise the events on social media:



 The Scottish Prison Visitors' Centre Roadshow begins this week, with events at Perth, Addiewell and Barlinnie.

Visitors' Centres help to improve the visiting experience for families & provide advice, information & support. Find out more 
ow.ly/CcoS500EbSc

[#VCRoadshow](https://twitter.com/HMPJustVisiting)



Some of the Visitors' Centres used social media to advertise their events:

Sasha Groves @sashagroves · 12 Jun

Just a few days left until our Visitors Centre Open Day at HMP YOI Polmont! Still time to register if you would like to come along!
[@HMPJustVisiting](#) [@CrossReach](#)

Prison Visitors' Centres in Scotland @HMPJustVisiting · 11 May

Join us at HMPYOI Polmont Visitors' Centre on 15 June 2023 as part of the Scottish Visitors' Centre Roadshow for information, activities, tours, refreshments and more!

Contact sasha.groves@crossreach.org.uk to find out more and book...
[Show more](#)

Scottish Prison Visitors' Centre Roadshow

WELCOME 15 JUNE 2023

Join us at HMPYOI Polmont Visitors' Centre to find out more about...

- The Visitors' Centre itself
- Families' experiences of prison visiting & the impact of imprisonment on families
- Our partnership with NHS Community Food team
- Storybook Families
- Activities during Children's Visits and Baby Massage
- Tour of the Visit room
- Buddy the Polmont puppy
- ...and more!

CROSSREACH providing a caring future

#VCRoadshow @HMPJustVisiting

All of the Visitors' Centre Providers were sent a social media image, produced by the Families Outside Communications team, that they could use on the day of their event to encourage social media engagement:

The 2023 National Prison Visitors' Centre Roadshow continues!

WELCOME

Scottish Prison Visitors' Centre Roadshow

#VCRoadshow @HMPJustVisiting

Some Centres promoted their events on social media:





Barnardos at HMP Edinburgh

Martin Crewe @CreweMartin · 25 Jul

Great open morning at HMP Edinburgh visitor centre - child friendly visiting space & excellent partnership working between @BarnardosScot & @scottishprisons inc prison chaplain service. Also good to meet up with @churchmoderator

HMP Edinburgh Visitor Centre @HMPedinburghVC · 31 Jul

Thank you to @scottishprisons and all our partners who supported us at HMP Edinburgh Visitor Centre Family Week/@FamiliesOutside Road Show. Thank you we couldn't have done it without you 😊

🗨️ 2 ❤️ 13 📊 346 📌 🔄

Cyrenians @Cyrenians1968 · 9 Jun

What a team we have @HMPAddiewell - the Visitor Roadshow event was a great opportunity to see the difference that we are making for families visiting loved ones in prison. This is part of what we do to prevent homelessness and to invest in the relationships that keep us together

Tess Hamilton 11 ❤️ @tessp1971 · 7 Jun

A massive thanks to the staff team @Cyrenians1968 @HMPAddiewell for all their hard work today at #VCRoadshow. We did it. 😊 We hosted this event today to 72 individuals with feedback "Massively impressed by all the efforts to support families and residents". @HMPJustVisiting

🗨️ 3 ❤️ 11 📊 700 📌 🔄

Cyrenians at HMP Addiewell





The Croft at HMP Barlinnie



The Croft Visitors' Centre, HMP Barlinnie
@HMPBarLVisitors

Next time you're in make sure to check out our new information board



Harriet Brace
@HarrietBrace

"If it weren't for the Fathers' Programme I'd still be the stranger to my wee boy that I was 12 months ago." A privilege to meet dads & @earlyyearsscot staff connected with the Family Visitor Centre at HMP Low Moss today earlyyearsscotland.org/children-and-f...

Early Years Scotland @earlyyearsscot · 9 Jun

Join us on Monday 12 June for a close-up look at our Family Visitor Centre at HMP Low Moss. Please contact our Centre Manager Kirsty at kirsty.waddell@earlyyearsscotland.org for details



2:09 pm · 12 Jun 2023 · 1,828 Views

Early Years Scotland at HMP Low Moss



Recovery Enterprises Scotland at HMP Kilmarnock

Recovery Enterprises Scotland
13 June · 🌐

🎉🎉 Exciting news, opening of our Foundations Hub at HMP Kilmarnock 🎉🎉

We are thrilled to announce the Roadshow and successful opening of our brand new Foundations Hub, Visitors Centre. Yesterday marked an important milestone in our journey to create a supportive and inclusive environment for people in custody and their families 🥰🥰

Within our Visitors Centre, we strive to foster strong connections, promote understanding and provide essential resources to people in custody and their loved ones during this challenging time ❤️👥

🏡 Creating a supportive environment:
The centre is designed to be a safe and welcoming space for people visiting the prison, where they can access various services and connect with others who may be going through a similar experience. We are committed to promoting resilience, healing and personal growth ❤️💛

🤝 Collaborative Efforts:
None of this would have been possible without the unwavering support of the staff at HMP Kilmarnock, who have welcomed us in and have very much made us part of their team, and also the dedicated staff, volunteers and community partners. We extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed their time, resources and expertise to make this vision a reality. Together we are making a difference 🥰💛

As we embark on this new chapter, we remain committed to continuously improving the services we provide. We welcome feedback and suggestions from the community as we strive to create a positive and transformative experience for all involved 🌍🤝

Thank you once again to all who have supported us on this journey. Let's work together to create a brighter future for people in custody and their families 🌈❤️

#VisitorsCentre #MakingADifference #StrongerTogether #SupportAndEmpowerment



CrossReach ✓
@CrossReach

The sun came out for us at the @crossreach Perth Visitor Support & Advice Centre open day. Great to meet and hear from staff, friends, volunteers and supporters who make the centre what it is. Thanks to SPS staff at HMP Perth for an interesting tour #vrroadshow #hmpjustvisiting



4:01 pm · 6 Jun 2023 · 784 Views

CrossReach at HMP Perth

We also had press interest from STV News who attended HMP Shotts



Getting Better Together
at HMP Shotts



The Getting Better Together team at HMP Shotts Visitors' Centre, were supported by the prison to welcome Ms Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs to their event.

This was covered by STV news and featured on their news broadcast on the 18th of July 2023.



William Stuart, governor at HMP Shotts, was quoted saying the visitors' centre plays a key role in maintaining family ties.

Watch the full news piece here: <https://news.stv.tv/scotland/hmp-shotts-i-told-my-daughter-we-were-visiting-daddy-at-work-on-prison-visit>



Following the completion of the last event at HMP Grampian in September, the National Lead sent an evaluation template (Appendix 2) to all Visitors' Centre managers for completion. This evaluation was also discussed at the August NPVCSG meeting. The following feedback was received from each Centre:



Cyrenians – HMP Addiewell Visitor Centre

Date of event: 7th June 2023

Numbers attended: 72

Attendees from which sector?

- Prison staff
- Social work
- NHS
- Education
- Third sector organisations
- Community projects

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

To raise awareness of what prison visitor centres do for families who visit a loved one in prison. The event also allowed us to showcase the work we as a visitor centre do directly – what we do, how we do it and where we refer to.

Outcomes achieved:

We achieved the objective of raising awareness of what prison visitor centres do as a whole. By having those in attendance have the same visit experience that families have to do, showed the importance of having visitor centres to support families. The more people that know how we work directly with families the more we can support them to receive the best support possible.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

“Trauma Informed! Well done 4 all the hard work 😊”

“Was informative visit, loved to hear about the bonding between residents & their children”

“Really great day thank you. You do some brilliant work. Will share!”

“Great to see the amazing work being done”

“A great visit so nice to see all the good work supporting families.”

“Amazing work, staff and speaker. Wonderful to see how residents are interested in project learning.”





Date of event: 23rd June 2023

Numbers attended: 33

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

- Raise awareness of prison visitor centres and provide information to other professionals in the community about what we do at the visitors centre and the purpose of having a visitors centre and why this is important.
- Show what kind of support we can provide for families who have a loved one in custody.
- Showcase what we do within our children's visits to maintain relationships between families and their loved ones in custody.

Outcomes achieved:

- Showcased our visitor centre to professionals in the community, organizations and potential partners.
- Provided them with information on how we support families and the partner agencies that we work alongside to do this.
- Provided information on what activities are available for families during a children's visit with practical examples (sand play, slime, moldable foam).
- Showcased our visitor centre to the Cabinet Secretary to raise awareness of prison visitor centres and how they can provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment to those families with a loved one in custody.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

"Very good morning, stealing ideas for Addiewell. Thanks carol"

"Very informative! Learned how the visiting system for prisons work"

"Really informative and insightful, learned lots of new information that we didn't know existed, it will be useful in our role supporting young people"

"Great service provided by the Visitor centre, fantastic to see. Everyone so friendly and welcoming"

"Very helpful staff and team. Enjoyed visit" Lisa, HMP Addiewell.

"Great support from GBT, well done ☺"

"Very impressive feedback board. Good event, however GBT should have had more time to showcase their support"

"Great support for families, really helpful to find out more info, as we did not know the support was available"

"Well done on the event, it was so well planned and a lot of hard work"

"Felt it scary as an adult visiting a real prison. So how scary would it be to a CHILD!!!"

"Thank you for sharing the important work. This is so important for breaking the cycle of ACE's"

"Thank you for a lovely morning, great work Team GBT"

"Thanks very much for all the information, it was a real eye opener seeing the other side, and how a silly mistake can lead you in a bad place, and how there's support for the families of those people still giving them hope."





HMP Edinburgh Visitor Centre

Date of event: 25th, 26th & 27th July 2023

Numbers attended: 42

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

Raise awareness on the work that the Visitors Centre do and promote our service to other partners.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

A lot of the services didn't realise how much we do at the centers and the support that we offer.

It was positive to work in partnership with SPS organising the week.



Early Years Scotland – HMP Low Moss Visitor Centre

Date of event: 12th June 2023

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

Raising awareness to funders, SPS, MSPs of the work we deliver to children and families within the family visitor centre.

Making contacts with others who work within the prison to build relationships in order to signpost families to.

Outcomes achieved:

The people that attended got to listen to what we are trying to achieve in the family visitor centre and the role of Early Years Scotland within the prison too.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

All attendees asked lots of questions about the Early Years Scotland programmes / family visitor centre and the visits. Everyone really benefitted from speaking to the two dads and were impressed with what they had to say and the impact that Early Years Scotland had made in their lives, they felt it was worthwhile to share their thoughts and insight into the programmes and the ways they benefitted personally.



HMP Glenochil

Date of event: 29th June 2023

Numbers attended: 47

Outcomes achieved:

We have successfully continued to secure more funding through Stirling council and Stirling voluntary enterprise through this event.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

"Thanks, you for inviting me along to the roadshow, I didn't appreciate how much work goes on for the families at HMP Glenochil, I will keep in touch and look forward to seeing how home start Alloa can work in partnership with Forth Valley Inclusion."



The Croft

Date of event: 7th June 2023

Numbers attended: 40

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

- Raise awareness of Croft Services to range of partners attending
- Hearing about the work we do through a family member experience
- Promoting the importance of Volunteers and the support they offer
- Highlighting successful partnership with SPS staff and the Family Strategy Group partners
- Launch of Video outlining process for those visiting their loved ones in HMP Barlinnie
- Launch of New logo and Marketing- feedback was so positive!

Outcomes achieved:

- Raised Awareness of Croft Services.
- Engaged with range of organisations that attended.
- Made new connections.
- Strengthened relationships.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

“Amazing afternoon was able to find out more about the amazing work you do!”

“Didn’t realise you did so much to support families”

“Fantastic staff team always willing to help and support”

“Lowmoss Prison staff interested to link up regarding Volunteering”



“Fantastic presentations and just the right amount of information to give a real flavour of the work that goes on”



CrossReach – HMP Polmont Visitor Centre

Date of event: 15th June 2023

Numbers attended: 57

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

Awareness raising among prison staff that the VC exists, also what we can offer to support those in prison.

Families to understand how the visitor centre can support them, also what opportunities there are in HMPYOI Polmont.

Outside agencies, churches, funders to appreciate the impact of imprisonment and how they can support this work.

Outcomes achieved:

Increased awareness among prison staff and appreciation of support available to families. Also, positive experience of successful running event within the prison in cooperation with prison staff, good for relationship/ partnership building.

Families feel more familiar with the prison- opportunities, who’s who, how things work, support available through the Visitors Centre.

Third sector partners have increased awareness of the impact of having a loved one in prison.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

“Excellent visit. Comprehensive outline of sterling work done at the hub.”

“Impressive, very informing, lovely staff.”

“Smashing to see the Centre with my own eyes! Well done.”

“Amazing to see all the work that is being done at Polmont. Such varied educational recovery and trauma informed options. Creative ideas from CrossReach, love the Storybook Families.”

“Really welcoming and interesting. Fantastic to meet everyone.”



Perth Visitors Support & Advice Centre

Date of event: 6th June 2023

Numbers attended: 105 – 113 invited

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

- Raising awareness with agencies.
- Showcasing for funders, prison staff & new recruits.

Outcomes achieved:

As above & increased our distribution list for the newsletters – to over 600

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

“Very interesting, informative.”

“Perfect evidence of the SPS/voluntary sector partnership working.”

“You’ve got a great service here.” (CJA).

“I learned a lot about the ripple effect on the whole family when someone is imprisoned.”



Foundations Hub – HMP Kilmarnock Visitor Centre

Date of event: 12th June 2023

Numbers attended: 90

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

- Raising awareness of new service provision from ourselves with prison staff and partner organisations.

“Would be nice if games/ consoles/ clothes when young people leave for other young people who do not have family or funds to receive items.”



“We didn’t appreciate how much you offered for families.”

- Making visitors and families aware of service provision and links with partner organisations.
- Raising issues that families who are affected by imprisonment face.
- Increase partnership working and networks.
- Increase access to services for families and visitors by raising awareness of visitors centre and potential utilisation of the space to encourage partnership working.

Outcomes achieved:

Greater awareness of our presence and services at HMPK both for prison staff and external organisations. We have established new working partnerships with several organisations as a result of the open day. We now have several services committing to attending the visitor centre on a regular basis. This will increase provision and access to information for visitors and families.

Feedback from attendees/prison staff:

Feedback was very positive from both attendees and prison staff. They commented on the changes within the Visitors Centre that we had made and that it looked and felt a much more welcoming environment. Prison staff commented on the good working relationships that have been established between the Foundations Hub and themselves. Most attendees felt that the service we are providing is much needed. This was also echoed by visitors who attended who said they felt there was a “vast improvement” since we arrived. The Corra Foundation representative said “we have been made to feel very very welcome by all of the team”.

Any other comments:

The team thoroughly enjoyed the open day and found it extremely beneficial. It was great to meet with partner organisations face to face and discuss plans for working together going forward. It was beneficial to share good practice and future ideas.



The Family Centre and Help Hub – HMP&YOI Grampian

Date of event: 20th September 2023

Numbers attended: 74

Attendees from which sector?

We were so pleased to welcome and showcase our service to over seventy people from various statutory and non-statutory organizations (the Scottish Prison Service, Police and Fire service, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Social Work, NHS representatives, Local Councilors and local MSP reps, local TSIs, Families Outside reps, Streetsport, Aberdeenshire Early Years, and many others).

The roadshow was also attended by the families that we are working with. They were able to speak to other professionals directly and share their experience directly.

What did you hope to achieve from your event?

We are hoping to raise a profile of the VC with professional community and possibly develop new partnerships and improve service provision.

Outcomes achieved:

- Turnout exceeded our expectations.
- Potential partnerships that can improve service delivery.
- Opportunity for families to meet various representative from a different organizations
- Promotion of our new video

Reflections and Conclusions



This was the first year of Roadshow events for Prison Visitors' Centre providers in Scotland, having historically hosted a national conference. A total of 598 individuals were welcomed into 10 Centres across Scotland, including prison officers, social workers, MSPs, police officers and families of those impacted by imprisonment. Whilst we normally welcome around 90 individuals to a national conference, being able to raise awareness to such a large number was greatly welcomed by all providers of the Centres.

The opportunity to target specific agencies and professionals at a local level, who have an interest in the work, or whose work aligned with the work of the Centres, was unique and allowed for interaction and discussion not always facilitated within a conference environment. Several individuals who attended welcomed the opportunity to see for themselves the physical environment of a Prison Visitors' Centre and the work being carried out: "Smashing to see the Centre with my own eyes! Well done."

One of the main reasons Providers were keen to have local events was to raise awareness of the work they do within the Centres, something which is rarely seen, and to receive feedback such as "...I didn't appreciate how much work goes on for the families..." was evidence this goal was achieved.

The providers are confident that increasing awareness of what support the Centres provide will result in increased engagement of visitors and other professionals, getting support to those who need it and ensuring the service is meeting the needs of visitors. Feedback was positive and welcomed: "Families feel more familiar with the prison-opportunities, who's who, how things work, support available through the Visitors Centre".

Families are often the forgotten victims of imprisonment and Visitors' Centres play a key role in supporting individuals through their loved one's imprisonment. This was recognised by many of those that attended: "...showed the importance of having visitor centres to support families".

The time resource required to organise the event was great and would prevent a yearly Roadshow being organised nationally, however, the feedback on the Roadshow was extremely positive and we would like to repeat it in the future.

APPENDIX 1

Visitors' Centre Conference Roadshow

June 2023

Local Invite List Suggestions

- Local MSP - <https://www.parliament.scot/msps> to identify your MSP
- Local authority councillors/relevant staff
- Third-sector organisations (including food banks)
- Prison staff and management teams
- NHS
- Community Justice Partnership Contacts
- Education
- Social Work
- Funders – current and potential
- Local media (If appropriate)
- Community Champions (supermarkets and other orgs that support with donations)
- Churches
- Local shops
- Board members

When creating the invite list it may be worth thinking about the purpose of holding the open door event:

Is your event to raise awareness within your community with other agencies, to make links and create referral opportunities? Is it to encourage funders to get involved?

Or is your event aimed at families and raising awareness of the services available to them?



Scotland's Prison Visitors' Centres



@HMPJustVisiting



Prison Visitors' Centres in Scotland

