

PRISONERS' ADVICE SERVICE

THE INDEPENDENT LEGAL CHARITY PROVIDING INFORMATION AND
REPRESENTATION TO PRISONERS

JUSTICE BEHIND BARS

Dear Friend of PAS

As the Summer draws to a close, and Autumn approaches, its time to reflect on the past few months. For many of us, the easing of Covid restrictions has seen the return of events, festivals and holidays. For PAS it has seen the resumption of our Annual Lecture series, the LLST (London Legal Support Trust) London Legal Walk and, more recently, our Outreach Clinics. As the new Fundraising and Communications Officer at PAS, I was recently lucky enough to attend a clinic at HMP Downview and describe this fascinating experience below.

It is, of course, with caution that we approach life after the pandemic and there are still many reports of prisoners spending far too long locked in their cells without access to meaningful activities or education. This has been highlighted by comments included in the recent inspections of HMPs [Berwyn](#), [Featherstone](#) and [Onley](#). We hope to see improvements soon and, in the meantime, PAS' caseworkers will continue to support prisoners in every way they can.

As always, we're grateful to all our donors for their support and any donation big or small is greatly appreciated. [Donate here](#)

Erin

Fundraising and Communications Officer

PAS Helps Prisoner Transfer Away from Childhood Abuser

A male prisoner, who had suffered sexual assault and rape as a child, contacted us via the Advice Line after he was placed in the same prison as his rapist, who was serving a sentence for the abuse committed on the prisoner.

At the time of the rape, the prisoner was known by a different name. This meant that the prison alert system had not been activated when housing the prisoner, and that – as a result – the prisoner was having to encounter his abuser on a daily basis. This was understandably traumatic. The prisoner had requested transfers to seven other prisons, but these were all rejected. He then asked

PAS for help.

We contacted the prison, reminding them of their duty of care to the prisoner, and that prisoners are entitled to the same protections as any person in the community. We also asked them to explain why the prisoner's transfer requests had all been refused and what steps the prison was taking to ensure that the prisoner did not encounter his abuser. The prison informed us that they had only been able to apply to two of the institutions the prisoner had requested due to a lack of transport – and were still waiting to hear from them. PAS pointed out the urgency of the situation and asked that everything be done to move the prisoner as soon as possible.

The prisoner was then permitted to transfer to an alternative prison. Transport was organised and booked for him to move there.

Outreach Resumes: A Visit to HMP Downview

With the lifting of Covid restrictions in prisons, PAS has been given permission to re-enter some prisons and restart Outreach Clinics. These clinics are held inside prisons and allow caseworkers to meet with prisoners face-to-face to discuss any legal issues or problems they may have. I was fortunate to attend a recent clinic in women's prison, HMP Downview (Sutton), with PAS' Women's Prisoner Caseworker. It was my first visit to a prison and a very eye-opening experience.

I arrived at HMP Downview at 8.30am. The clinic is held in the prison library and I passed through what felt like at least ten locked gates before reaching the library. Our caseworker and I had nine women registered to attend the clinic and got straight into the first meeting as time



Matthew Evans, Director of The Aire Centre

The Return of the PAS Annual Lecture

July saw the return of the PAS Annual Lecture series after a break of nearly three years, and PAS, with the support of [Reed Smith](#), was delighted to host the in-person event after its hiatus during the pandemic. Matthew Evans, Director of [The AIRE Centre](#) and former managing

was limited. Each prisoner's situation is unique and the issues they face are many and varied; from access to adequate mental health services and difficulties accessing food suitable for medical conditions, to procedural issues such as requests to view personal information held by HMPPS. The common thread I found during the appointments is that prisoners, through no fault of their own, just do not have enough information regarding the prison system or processes, legal or otherwise. This was the case with a number of women I met who all had questions relating to the ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence) process in the run up to their eventual release. Our caseworker clearly advised them on the process and their legal rights, and after the clinic, each service-user will receive a follow up letter clarifying the information and often including a PAS Toolkit or Information Sheets.

Of these clinics, our Women Prisoners' Caseworker says, 'It's fantastic to have Outreach Clinics back up and running. It's a vital service that enables those women who may be wary of speaking over the telephone in a public place, to talk freely and privately and to access the advice, help and support they need. It's important to listen with compassion to every woman who comes to see us as the issues faced by these women are often multifaceted, encompassing prison, human rights and family law.'

solicitor at PAS, delivered a thought-provoking lecture entitled, 'What about OUR Human Rights?' The lecture discussed the now normalised notion that Human Rights protect the individual over society and rights are linked to your participation in society rather than being fundamental. PAS is grateful for the support from Reed Smith in delivering this lecture.

A recording of the lecture is available [here](https://www.prisonersadvice.org.uk/pas-annual-lecture-2022/).

<https://www.prisonersadvice.org.uk/pas-annual-lecture-2022/>



Stepping up for Justice – the London Legal walk

On Tuesday 28 June, PAS staff once again took part in the London Legal Walk. Joining 12,000 walkers taking on the challenge of a 10k walk along the River Thames, we helped to raise funds for LLST, which then distributes the money amongst legal support services and charities across London, including PAS, which is an LLST Centre of Excellence.

On a fine, sunny evening, the PAS team set off from the starting point

Find out more about PAS' work with [women prisoners](#) on the PAS website.



behind the Royal Courts of Justice and took in many sights along London's South Bank before returning back to the Royal Court for a well-earned drink!



PAS' telephone Advice Line is run by caseworkers four days a week. Our telephone number is globally cleared within all prisons throughout England and Wales. **Please note: In order to assist a prisoner, we need to be contacted by them directly before we can discuss matters with family members.**

NUMBER: 020 7253 3323

OPENING TIMES

**Monday, Wednesday and Friday
10:00-12:30 and 14:00-16:30**

Freephone Service from Women's Prisons

NUMBER: 0800 024 6205

Tuesday morning 10:00-12.00

Prisoners' Advice Service is a registered charity (No: 1054495) and is a company limited by guarantee (No: 3180659).

Copyright © Prisoners' Advice Service 2015, all rights reserved.

www.prisonersadvice.org.uk

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Prisoners' Advice Service · P A S, P O Box 46199 · London, London EC1M 4XA · United Kingdom