

PRISONERS' ADVICE SERVICE

THE INDEPENDENT LEGAL CHARITY PROVIDING INFORMATION AND
REPRESENTATION TO PRISONERS

JUSTICE BEHIND BARS

Dear Friend of PAS

We have much to celebrate this Spring, including the arrival of a new Legal Caseworker, our first ever Outreach Clinics at HMP Wormwood Scrubs and our 2024-25 output figures, which saw Caseworkers dispense legal advice and support to some 40,000 prisoners over the twelve months.

We also highlight the case of Vincent Horsfall, an ex-prisoner whom PAS supported to secure rightful compensation against G4S Care and Justice Services following two unlawful counts of body scanning.

At the time of writing, the prison population stands at 88,081, with the justice system facing total gridlock by next year. The [Prison Estate Capacity report](#), published last month, urges rapid action on the overcrowding crisis, with forecasts indicating that capacity will run out again in early 2026 - despite the recent early release of thousands of prisoners.

Amidst the many challenges facing the Criminal Justice System, PAS continues to provide a listening ear to those inside and to ensure that access to justice is truly available to all.

We sincerely hope that you will enjoy reading this newsletter and thank you for your ongoing support.

Case-Study: PAS Helps Ex-Prisoner Secure Compensation following Unlawful Use of X-ray Body Scans

PAS assisted Vincent Horsfall, an ex-prisoner who had been wrongfully subjected to two X-ray body scans whilst serving his sentence.

Mr Horsfall was twice selected for body scans upon return from family visits at HMP Oakwood – despite no intelligence to suggest that any item was concealed. At the time, the prison's policy permitted that 10% of prisoners attending visits be randomly selected for scanning. Though Mr Horsfall challenged this, he was threatened with punishment should he refuse the scans.

With the aid of a law book which he bought himself, Mr Horsfall subsequently launched his own Judicial Review against the prison. He challenged the policy as unlawful, arguing that it was not in accordance with the Secretary of State's policy on the use of X-ray body scans and was in breach of his rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Permission was granted to proceed to a full hearing and an interim order made that he should not be scanned again until the conclusion of the case.

Mr Horsfall thus attended another family visit, bringing with him a copy of the court order. He was, however, accused of faking the document and sent to segregation until the court confirmed that the order was genuine.

Upon his release from prison, Mr Horsfall contacted PAS to explain his progress and request our involvement at his upcoming hearing. PAS agreed to take on his case, instructing Stuart Withers at No5 Barristers' Chambers.

Following the hearing, the High Court ruled that Mr Horsfall had been unlawfully subject to two X-ray body scans at HMP Oakwood. G4S Care and Justice Services, who manage the prison, were subsequently ordered to pay him £7,500.00 in compensation – an unusually high sum reflecting the peculiarities of the case.

With the success of Mr Horsfall's case, PAS anticipates that other prisoners subject to unlawful body scanning may also seek rightful compensation.



PAS Welcomes New Legal Caseworker

PAS is delighted that solicitor Debobroto Dey has this month joined the team in a new Legal Caseworker role at the charity.

Debo has twenty years' experience in Prison Law, specialising in parole hearings, adjudications, minimum tariff review, sentence calculation and Judicial Reviews. More recently, he has worked as a Home Office Legal Advisor within the Managed Migration Department, and as a Criminal Defence Solicitor.

For the beginning of his tenure at PAS, Debo will be working with our busy Community Care Caseworker in dispensing legal advice and support to older, ill and disabled prisoners, ensuring that their legal, human and healthcare rights are rightfully met.

New output figures for 2024-25, show that older prisoners made up 20% of callers to our Advice Line and 44% of letter-writers. 55% of callers to the Advice Line and 72% of letter-writers self-identified as suffering from a chronic health condition, a disability, mental health issues or learning difficulties. Over the course of the year, Community Care Caseworkers delivered seven Outreach Clinics to the older, ill and disabled in two jails, seeing 56 prisoners one-to-one,

and opening 13 new end-to-end legal cases on behalf of older, ill and disabled prisoners.

We welcome Debo most warmly.

PAS Dispenses Legal Advice to some 40,000 Prisoners between 2024 - 25

We are proud to have assisted many thousands of prisoners throughout 2024-25. Our core service output figures for 2024-25 are as follows:

- we successfully responded to 38,170 calls from prisoners to our telephone Advice Line;
 - we received 866 letters from prisoners, and sent out 5,854 letters or related items in response;
 - we delivered 63 Outreach Clinics to 472 prisoners both face-to-face and one-to-one inside the walls of 18 prisons;
 - we prosecuted end-to-end legal casework on behalf of 84 new prisoners;
 - our Toolkits, Guides and Information Sheets were downloaded from our website on many thousands of occasions. They include recent addition, [‘Terminating Your IPP Licence: A Legal Guide’](#) produced throughout 2024-25 in partnership with [The Howard League for Penal Reform](#) and [Prison Reform Trust](#).
 - our website continued to act as a hub of information on our work, latest news and events, attracting tens of thousands of visitors. Over the year, we engaged some 4,200 followers on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and expanded to [Bluesky](#) for the very first time.
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Outreach Clinics at HMP Wormwood Scrubs

PAS is pleased to have begun outreach work at London jail, HMP Wormwood Scrubs, after Hammersmith and Fulham Council took a direct interest in helping to facilitate prisoner access to legal advice there. The prison becomes the tenth in Greater London to benefit from PAS' Outreach Clinics, with one of our Caseworkers visiting on a monthly basis.

PAS Trustee, Martine Lignon remarked:

'It is good to start Outreach Clinics at HMP Wormwood Scrubs. We know that people in prison really appreciate the chance to speak face-to-face to our Caseworkers. Though everyone is welcome to attend, outreach work especially benefits prisoners who are uncomfortable speaking on the phone, or who do not speak English as a first language.'

Our work at Wormwood Scrubs will also benefit local families who have a relative in prison, reassuring them that their loved-ones are being treated humanely while behind bars.

We are grateful to Hammersmith and Fulham Council for their funding of these clinics.



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 10:00-12.30

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

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