



Press statement: publication of the Farmer Review into family ties for women in prison and under probation supervision in the community

Clinks welcomes the publication of the report of the Farmer Review for women, which states that family relationships are a 'must have' for women's rehabilitation.

Clinks supported the review, the report of which is launching in the House of Lords today. Clinks was a member of the review's expert panel and led its call for evidence to ensure that the experience of women in contact with the criminal justice system, their families and the organisations that support them could be utilised to improve the system for people in the future.

We are pleased to see the Ministry of Justice committing to take forward its wide ranging recommendations, including for women's centres' funding to be made sustainable, improving communications between women in prison and their relatives; and ensuring that sentencers have accurate information about women's family ties and the impact of custody on their relationships.

This work follows Lord Farmer's previous work in which he was commissioned, in partnership with Clinks, to chair an independent review into how supporting men in prison in England and Wales to engage with their families can reduce reoffending and address intergenerational crime.

Commenting on the publication of today's review, Anne Fox, Chief Executive Officer of Clinks said,

"Through our call for evidence, to support Lord Farmer's latest review we heard from 372 women in prison – approximately 10% of the female prison population - along with their families, the voluntary organisations that support them and academics. We are delighted that the voices of these experts have been able to help shape Lord Farmer's focus and recommendations.

"We are pleased to see the review recognise the importance of voluntary organisations, including women's centres, in supporting women to maintain and develop constructive family ties, whilst also recognising that many women experience domestic and other abuse, meaning that their existing relationships are 'not conducive to their rehabilitation'.

"We look forward to continuing to work with Lord Farmer, the Ministry of Justice and HM Prisons and Probation Service, on behalf of the voluntary sector that support women in the criminal justice system and their families to explore how these recommendations will be taken forward."

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Interviews and more information

Anne Fox, Clinks Chief Executive Officer is available for interview.

Contact Jess Mullen, Head of Policy and Communications, on 07817872031 or jessica.mullen@clinks.org

The Farmer Review

In 2018, as announced in the government's Female Offender Strategy, Lord Michael Farmer was commissioned to review the recommendations of his 2017 review into family ties for men in prison, through the lens of women in contact with the criminal justice system and their needs. Clinks sat on the review's expert panel and led its call for evidence. Clinks sought people's views through a variety of methods, including hard copy surveys and focus groups held both in custody and in the community. Just under 500 people fed into the review, including women in contact with the criminal justice system and their families and friends, as well as academics, voluntary organisations and the police.

In 2016, Lord Farmer, in partnership with Clinks, was commissioned to chair an independent review into how supporting men in prison in England and Wales to engage with their families can reduce reoffending and address intergenerational crime. Clinks gathered the views of over 1,000 men in prison, their families, voluntary organisations across England and Wales, prison staff and academics. The findings and recommendations of the Farmer Review (published in August 2017) emphasised the fundamental importance of family relationships. Lord Farmer said that each prison must include a local family offer to ensure effective family work is delivered inside prisons. He also stated that the Ministry of Justice should ensure the importance of family ties as a golden thread running through the new policy frameworks. The Farmer Review concluded that quality family services will help people turn away from crime and will support families to cope.

All of the recommendations from the initial review were accepted by the Ministry of Justice and Clinks is now working with Lord Farmer and the Ministry of Justice to encourage the change needed to ensure that positive family relationships are placed at the heart of work to reduce reoffending and support people in prison.

About Clinks

Clinks supports, promotes and represents the voluntary sector working with people in the criminal justice system and their families. Our vision is of a vibrant, independent and resilient voluntary sector that enables people to transform their lives. www.clinks.org | [@Clinks Tweets](https://twitter.com/Clinks)