



**PRESS RELEASE 26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2012:  
Prisoners' Wives**

'Prisoners Wives', the much-anticipated addition to BBC's original drama season, shines light on the other victims of crime, the families of offenders; the hidden casualties. Starring Emma Rigby and Jonas Armstrong the series is set around the lives of four very different women, highlighting the impact of imprisonment upon family life and the stigma families face as they come to terms with the challenges of being 'prisoners' wives'.

Behind the drama lie the real-life stories and experiences of men and women who have faced the reality of supporting a family member through a prison sentence. In 2010 POPS (Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group) were approached by Tiger Aspect Productions to act as consultants for the series 'Prisoner's Wives'. Established by families of prisoners in 1988, POPS now deliver support services to families throughout the Criminal Justice System both locally and nationally. As a charity directed and developed by families POPS pride ourselves on our user-led approach and were keen that the voices and experiences of offenders' families were reflected in any drama concerning them. As a result, a group of 15 family members were invited to share their experiences with Tiger Aspect, guiding the development of the script and visiting the set to meet the cast.

It was important to the families that the series represented the trauma of arrest and the reality of the emotional and practical issues that arise when supporting a loved one through a prison sentence. Stigma, from within families and communities, is a significant issue and it is our hope that the series will help to break down some of the barriers families face and promote better understanding. We recognise that as a drama series there will be twists and turns that many regular families do not experience when supporting a relative in prison, but our initial impression is of a drama which highlights the isolation, confusion and distress that many families experience and which tackles head on the reality that imprisonment can affect people from all walks of life.

*If you would like any further information about POPS please get in touch with us on 0161 702 1000 or by emailing [media@partnersofprisoners.co.uk](mailto:media@partnersofprisoners.co.uk).*

*If you are a family member supporting a relative within the Criminal Justice System and you require information or support you can contact the National Offenders' Families Helpline for free and in confidence on 0808 808 2003 or by email on [info@offendersfamilieshelpline.org](mailto:info@offendersfamilieshelpline.org)*