



Dear friends,

It has been an eventful few months for Birth Companions staff, volunteers and Lived Experience Team members, with new services, campaigns, recruitment, trainings and projects all launching over the past few months.

Read on for a quick round up of some of our recent activities, and remember you can always [reach out to us](#) with any questions, comments and ideas.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support for our work. It means the world to us.

With love, strength and solidarity,
Birth Companions

Volunteer with us: Applications closing soon

We are looking for new volunteers to join our 5-month training programme to become part of our incredible team of highly dedicated and committed Birth Companions who deliver support to pregnant women and new mothers experiencing inequality and disadvantage in the community in London.

[Full information on the role and application process](#)

Application closing date: Monday 5th May 2025, 5pm

Training programme start date: July 2025

The Lost Mothers Project report launch

The [Lost Mothers Project](#) is a collaboration between Dr Laura Abbott at the University of Hertfordshire, Birth Companions, and an advisory team of women with personal experience of pregnancy, motherhood and separation from a baby while in prison. This groundbreaking project brings vital focus to the needs and experiences

of women who are separated from their infants due to imprisonment. It also considers the experiences of the health and social care professionals and prison officers who play a central role in delivering care and in shaping the outcomes for these women and their babies.

Last week, the Lost Mothers Project final report and policy spotlight paper were launched at an impressive event at the British Library. At the event, [Clean Break](#) staged a performance of their powerful play based on the research, [Scenes from Lost Mothers](#), and members of the Lost Mothers research team, Birth Companions and Clean Break also took part in a moving Q&A session.

[Read the Lost Mothers reports](#)

The research findings about mothers experiences of separation within the criminal justice system also received [coverage in the Guardian](#).

New perinatal support service in HMP Eastwood Park

Last month, we launched our new perinatal support service in Eastwood Park prison, where our coordinator will be working alongside specialist volunteers and trained peer supporters to deliver a programme of wellbeing activities, weekly groups, and one-to-one support for pregnant women and mothers who are separated from babies in the community.

Despite changes to prison policy in recent years, navigating pregnancy and early motherhood within the harsh prison environment remains one of the most challenging experiences imaginable. We are so pleased to be able to offer our specialist support to more women through this new service, and to harness the power of lived experience and peer support to make our work there as impactful as possible.

The Izzy Project

Our Hackney-based support service for women at risk of or experiencing separation from their babies shortly after birth, the [Izzy Project](#), was featured this week in a blog from the [Agenda Alliance](#).

In the blog post, our Izzy Project Coordinator Helen and LET member Brooklynn discuss the service and its co-design process, and reflect on why support services like this are so vital for women facing separation from their babies.

1001 Days in the CJS campaign



Birth Companions recently launched our latest campaign, calling for an ambitious new approach to pregnancy, birth and early motherhood across the whole criminal justice system.

Evidence shows that what happens in the first 1001 days from conception to a child's second birthday lays the foundations for their long-term physical and mental health and wellbeing. Yet the criminal justice system – policing, courts, prison and probation – is ill-equipped to deal with this critical period in the lives of mothers and their babies. This is creating huge risks to women, and the life chances of their children.

That's why we're calling for a radically different approach to the 1001 days across the criminal justice system, through significant changes to policy and practice. The work of the Women's Justice Board, the Partnership Delivery Group, and the Independent Review of Sentencing present real opportunities for change. We have to seize them. We invite you, our partners and supporters, to join us in making the 1001 days a priority across the whole criminal justice system.

[Find out more about our campaign calls](#)

Webinar: Supporting pregnant women and mothers under probation supervision

Birth Companions and **Advance** invite you to join us at our joint webinar, to hear about our **specialist services** for women under probation supervision who are pregnant or have children under the age of two, and reflect on why this type of specialist and tailored provision is so crucial.

Supporting pregnant women and mothers of young children under probation supervision: A Birth Companions and Advance webinar

Date: Tuesday 20th May 2025

Time: 11:30 - 12:30

Venue: Online

[See full speaker details and book your place](#)

In case you missed it...

Birth Companions team members have been involved in lots of webinars recently, as hosts, presenters and guests. In case you missed any, grab a cuppa and catch up on these recordings!

Early insights from the Izzy Project

Webinar hosted by Birth Companions

Taking a Strand: Hair strand testing in family law

Webinar hosted by Birth Companions, 4PB Chambers and MSB Solicitors

Tackling inequalities and disadvantage during pregnancy and birth: Children's social care contact

Video series hosted by The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Breaking out of the Justice Loop

Event hosted by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies

*If you'd like more information on anything mentioned in this newsletter, please **get in touch**.*
