



THE FRIENDS of ERLESTOKE PRISON

ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015

Date of report: AUGUST 2015

HMP Erlestoke
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1. Chair's report

Welcome to the third Annual Report from the Friends of Erlestoke Prison. This report reflects another year of constant change within the Prison Service. The Government's 'Strategy for Reform' launched in May 2013, which included plans for transforming rehabilitation services and opening them up to a range of new providers, started to become a reality. Alongside this, some prisons were selected to become resettlement establishments and others were selected to focus on rehabilitation. HMP Erlestoke became a rehabilitation prison and as of January 2015, was no longer tasked to provide 'resettlement services'. Sadly this meant the Friends had to terminate the contract with their Housing Support Worker in December 2014, as this type of service is now the responsibility of the local Community Rehabilitation Companies, who will provide 'through the gate' resettlement services.



The demographic of prisoners at HMP Erlestoke has also changed and Erlestoke now only houses prisoners whose sentence is over four years, including life sentenced and IPP (Imprisonment for Public Protection, i.e. with indeterminate sentences) prisoners. Prisoners with sentences less than 12 months remain in local prisons; category D prisoners are allocated, as far as possible, to an open prison near their home. Prisoners with sentences between one and four years are allocated to a resettlement prison.

In summer 2014, HMP Erlestoke opened the 'Family Interventions Unit' and the Friends have been working with Barnados and the prison to improve the overall visitor experience. This includes the Friend's transport scheme, which has grown over the last year and now has 12 volunteers who, using their own cars, drive prisoners' families between Devizes and Westbury and the prison on visit days. Thank you to all volunteers who have joined us this year and continue to give up their time.

In November 2014, the Friends were delighted to host a visit from our Royal Patron, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to the prison. Her Royal Highness met with prison staff, prisoners, Trustees and volunteers and was shown examples of the Friends' work with prisoners and their families.

Fundraising has continued throughout the year and thank you to those who joined us at our wonderful Christmas Concert in Edington Priory and those who came to play bridge in Heytesbury last May.

Thank you also to all our supporters who enable us to continue our work and to all those organisations with whom we have had the pleasure of working throughout this year – P.E.O.P.L.E., Leonardos, the CAB, Barnados, the Phoenix Trust and Rebecca Cochran-Patrick, our wonderful drama teacher.

We look forward to another year of partnering with the prison to support prisoners and their families and to your continued help and faith in the work that we do.

Belinda Southwell, Chair, Friends of Erlestoke Prison

2. Reference and administrative details of the Friends of Erlestoke Prison, its Trustees and advisers

1. The charity is known as 'The Friends of Erlestoke Prison'. No other name is used.

2. The registration number is: 1147582

3. The address of the charity is:

HMP Erlestoke

Westbury Road

Erlestoke

Devizes, SN10 5TU

4. The charity Trustees for the period of this report:

Belinda Southwell (Chair) Angela Hughes (Secretary)

Mark Mangham (Treasurer) Juliet Cooper

Lynda Wearn

5. Patrons for the period of this report:

The charity has one Royal Patron: HRH The Duchess of Cornwall

and 5 Patrons:

Sir John Nutting Bt., QC

The Lord Margadale of Islay

John Bush, CVO, OBE

Sir Christopher Benson

Robert Hiscox

3. Objectives of the Friends of Erlestoke Prison

The objective of the Friends of Erlestoke Prison is 'to promote and support the rehabilitation of prisoners who are or have previously been prisoners at HMP Erlestoke, by the provision of funds and services as the Trustees think fit, and in consultation with prison Governors/Governing Body'.

HMP Erlestoke is a Category C adult male rehabilitation prison and is the only prison in Wiltshire. There are eight residential units; three are standard units, one of which is used for induction, four are enhanced units and one is dedicated to intervention programmes. The total operational capacity of the prison is around 524. When men are released from Erlestoke, they transition to a resettlement prison, close to their home or close to where they will begin their lives after prison. They are then faced with the many challenges of settling back into the community and managing their lives without falling back into old habits and re-offending. The Friends of Erlestoke Prison helps to support prisoners with the challenges of rehabilitation and changing behaviour and also helps them to keep in touch with their partners and children whilst completing their sentence. The charity also aims to raise awareness and promote local understanding of the prison, which for many, is an unknown 'hidden' institution.

4. Structure, governance and management

The charity has five Trustees, one Royal Patron, five Patrons, and a small committee of enthusiastic local volunteers. There are no paid staff. The Trustees hold regular meetings to ensure that they remain up to date on what is happening in the prison, make decisions on requests for support, plan future events and discuss fundraising ideas. Volunteers are often invited to join these meetings, as are prison staff and members of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB), who provide additional expertise on rehabilitation issues.

The annual strategy meeting was held in February 2015, led by an independent (volunteer) facilitator. Recent changes in the prison system were discussed with prison staff, in particular their impact on HMP Erlestoke and the charity. The biggest change was the repurposing of HMP Erlestoke in January 2015 to a rehabilitation prison focusing on drug, alcohol and behaviour change programmes; this led to a change in strategy for the Friends of Erlestoke to concentrate more on rehabilitation and less on resettlement.

The Trustees met with a forum of prisoners in January 2014 who provided a wealth of ideas for new projects. They included: drama, driving theory courses, self employment advice and training, franchise preparation (e.g. Timpsons who deliver a range of services including shoe repairs, key cutting, engraving services), resettlement support, offender mentoring, fork lift driving instruction, vehicle mechanics course, setting up repair shops for TVs and computers, a cycle repair shop, spectacle testing and repairs for overseas disbursement and more family days. Some of the ideas could not be pursued because of the resource limitations within the prison or because they were resettlement activities, but several were pursued by the charity, namely drama, driving theory courses and family days. Other issues were raised, outside the scope of the charity and these were passed to the Independent Monitoring Board and the prison management team. Some of the men were uncertain as to how to put ideas or suggestions to the Friends, who addressed this by publishing regular articles in the internal prison magazine 'Paper Soldier'. The Friends have decided that more prisoner forums are required in 2015 to collect offender suggestions, and if possible, include a representative from each residential unit to ensure greater diversity and a wider range of views.

The charity has a formal and documented process by which requests for funding and/or support for projects or initiatives are made to the Trustees. There is a defined set of criteria for selecting and prioritising suitable projects/initiatives and to aid the Trustees in deciding what to support with the funds available. This criteria set was reviewed in May 2014 resulting in some minor changes to the form. Each funding request is discussed at Trustee meetings and a decision made about support in the light of all requests made in that period. The system has worked well during this reporting year.

The charity has been well supported by the prison and involvement of prison staff ensures that the charity is focused on the real needs of prisoners and their families. The charity has not and will not fund anything, which is within the Prison Service budget and which is deemed to be the service's fundamental responsibility.

- a. Nature of governing document: Trust Deed, dated 28th May 2012

- b. Methods for recruitment and training of new Trustees: the five Trustees are all volunteers and most offered their services as part of the start up of the charity. Initial recruitment was achieved through the Chair and Secretary's personal network of interested individuals. There has been no requirement for additional or replacement Trustees during this reporting period.

It is the charity's policy to advertise new or replacement Trustee positions and to carry out a full selection and interview process. All Trustees are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service. They are also risk assessed by the Prison security department. Trustees attend relevant conferences and seminars at a local level to ensure their knowledge is current and relevant to the work that they perform for the charity. Trustees also maintain their knowledge of the Criminal Justice System and the Charity Sector through personal research and ongoing liaison with the prison and the HMP Erlestoke Independent Monitoring Board. (www.imb.org.uk)

5. Our Royal Patron

The Friends were delighted to host a visit from HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, our Royal Patron, on the 18th November 2014. Our Patron, Robert Hiscox, who is also the Deputy Lieutenant of Wiltshire and Dave Quinnell, the Acting Governor of HMP Erlestoke at that time, welcomed Her Royal Highness to the prison. The Duchess visited the Education Department to meet staff and prisoners in the library who discussed literacy in the prison. The tour then moved to the bricklaying and plastering workshop where Her Royal Highness talked to prisoners who were learning those skills as part of their sentence plans. This was followed by visits to the Chapel, the Visits Hall and the Visitor Centre. The Duchess met with staff, prisoners, Trustees and volunteers and was shown further examples of the Friends' work with prisoners and their families. This included being presented with a painting by an ex-offender, who has used his artistic talents to set up a business selling his work.



6. Marketing and Publicity

The visit from our Royal Patron generated local media interest and there were evening time news items on local BBC and ITV. There was also a BBC Wiltshire lunchtime slot, which included interviews with volunteers and comments from Her Royal Highness.

Several articles were placed in local parish magazines to promote the Christmas 2014 event (section 8.2) and there were advertisements to attract more transport scheme volunteer drivers (section 7.11).

Talks have been given to local organisations (Women's Institutes and local societies) to overview HMP Erlestoke and the work of the Friends. Leaflets are distributed at all events.

Articles about the Friends are now included in the prison internal magazine, Paper Soldier, which is written and edited by prisoners, for prisoners. The transport scheme continues to be promoted regularly in the magazine. There are charity leaflets and posters promoting the transport scheme in the Visitor Centre and Visits Hall.

The website had been maintained throughout this financial year and it is now being redesigned for launch later in 2015. The redesign will include a new look and feel and additional content, particularly for prisoners' families.

7. Projects

7.1 Bookstart



In conjunction with the prison library, the Friends continued to support the Bookstart initiative, which encourages dads and children to read and play together during prison visits by making Bookstart packs available to families on visiting days.

7.2 Housing Support Worker

From March 2013 to the end December 2014, the Friends funded a Housing Support Worker to help resettle prisoners into suitable accommodation on release. In addition to the funded position, there were two volunteers and a prison orderly who worked with the prisoners. The team made contact with new prisoners during their induction period to assess their housing needs. Towards the end of their sentences, the Housing Support group worked with prisoners who needed support to ensure that no prisoner was released from HMP Erlestoke without stable and secure accommodation, unless they chose otherwise. The function built links with housing agencies, housing providers, hostels and councils in areas where prisoners were released and a bank of knowledge was developed on housing law, legislation and current practice.



From April 2014 to December 2014, the numbers of prisoners accessing the service decreased significantly as prisoners were being moved to resettlement prisons providing Community Rehabilitation Services, if they were within three months of their release date. The Housing Support Worker contract was terminated at the end of December 2014 and resettlement services were withdrawn from HMP Erlestoke in January 2015.

7.3 Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) Worker – Visitor Centre

Following the take up of the CAB service in the Visitor Centre during the last year, the Friends continued to fund a CAB worker who facilitated drop in sessions and private meetings during 2 visit days per month. The majority of families preferred open discussions in the informal settings of the Centre, which also enabled them to support one another during stressful times. Typical issues which have been dealt with included debt and general money matters, benefit and welfare reform, court letters, unpaid television licences and the court process, refusal of Legal Aid for a family member and advice on options, advice on property matters (equity in house and effect on debts), bailiffs rules and family matters such as divorce, separation and related finances and grandparents' rights.

Families are also referred to their local CAB and the Wiltshire Citizen's Advice line where appropriate. During this reporting period, we were fortunate to have a law student who worked alongside the Advisor and supported the sessions at the prison, and helped to prepare information and publicity for the service.

7.4 Drama

7.4.1 Geese Theatre Company



The Friends strongly believe in the power of drama as part of prisoner rehabilitation and at the end of August 2014, we contracted Geese Theatre Company www.geese.co.uk to deliver the 3-day 'Connect' project, which explores offending, problem solving and goal-setting. 9 prisoners attended the project and our Chair, Belinda Southwell joined the project on the afternoon of the last day. Belinda commented, *"the skill and expertise of the Geese employees was most impressive and the mask wearing helped the men to act well outside their usual boundaries - it's a project that I hope we shall be repeating again soon."*

Participant feedback is summarised below. The percentages of participants stated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements as a result of the course:

I have more confidence	87.5%
I have a better understanding of my behaviour	100%
I take more responsibility for my behaviour	87.5%
I want to make some changes	100%
I have noticed changes in my behaviour already	65.5%
I have learnt new skills which I will use	87.5%
I enjoyed the project	100%
Using theatre / drama made the project more memorable	100%
I would recommend the course to someone else	100%

Other comments from the prisoners included:

'It's made me see a bigger picture'. *'Reminds me that there is always a chance to set goals and stick to them'.*

'It will make me think more before I make a decision'. *'It gave me a better understanding of myself'.*

'How did they manage to fit so much into 3 days!' 'The mask wearing I thought was fantastic and very true to life'.

'I have very much enjoyed it and I will be telling all the other inmates about it and they should 'deffo' come and do it'.

Geese Theatre Company have specialised in developing drama-based methods as tools for intervening in offending behaviour since 1987. They explore life choices and encourage positive change through 'learning by doing', by the exploration of situations closely related to their own life experiences. The Company is a team of theatre practitioners who present interactive theatre and facilitate drama-based groupwork, staff training and consultation for the probation service, prisons, young offender institutions, youth offending teams, secure hospitals and related agencies throughout the UK and abroad.

7.4.2 Rebecca Cochran-Patrick

The Friends have also supported the creation and development of 2 small drama 'showcases' inspiringly coached and led by Rebecca Cochran-Patrick, in June 2014 and March 2015. Both productions were performed in front of an audience comprising members of the public and prison staff. All profits from ticket sales were, and will be used to fund future events of this nature. The June production involved 6 prisoners and was followed by a 3-course meal provided by the prison kitchen staff, including prisoners, for 30 people. The March event proved somewhat more troublesome as the lead actor was transferred to another prison days before the performance. He was however replaced by another offender who managed to give a commanding performance, albeit with very limited rehearsal time. The showcase in March consisted of several short sketches (some very well known), combined with poems and readings written by the prisoners. We have published one of those poems below, written by one of the participants and read at the showcase; many members of the audience asked for a copy.

Your Sweetness My Completeness

*It's funny how I can look back and see
What I didn't notice when you were with me
I didn't notice the timbre of your voice and
How it soothed
Nor the swan-like grace in which you moved.
I didn't understand your quietness in my animation
Or you considered advice on my deepening frustration.
And how you took life's ups and downs and offered
Solutions for my puzzled frowns.
It's only now as I'm removed from your view
That my memories paint this picture of you.*

*And what if I had stopped and listened?
And what if I had laid myself bare and let you in?
And what if I had stopped being afraid and
Trusted your advice? And what if I had set free my inner child?
Would it have made a difference? I think it would.*

*I held you on my terms – and loved you in my brokenness
Never seeing beyond my emotional veil.
Never seeing beyond my selfish needs.
But if you did, you must have, and now
If only I could tear a portal in time and space
To give you me, as you should have had.
To give you now what my memories see.
Then in your sweetness I could give you my completeness.*

HMP Erlestoke Offender, October 2014

7.5 Visits Hall Artwork

The Friends now have permission to exhibit paintings and information across one wall in the prison visits hall and a number of offender's paintings are already on display. We will be encouraging more prisoners to exhibit in the future to present some of the talent within HMP Erlestoke to prison visitors.

The first wall exhibition was shown to HRH The Duchess of Cornwall during her visit on November the 18th 2014 where she was introduced to one of the artists, who is now working as an artist in his home community.

7.6 Kitchen NVQ

In October 2014, the Friends supported the delivery of qualifications within the prison kitchen. This had been previously funded under OLASS 3 (Offender Learning and Skills Service) but there was no mechanism with which to do this under OLASS 4, (which was introduced in August 2013). This lack of provision had caused the prison concern and had been highlighted on several occasions by the Independent Monitoring Board.

The Prison sourced an appropriate, industry standard qualification - 'Food Production and Cookery' - that could be delivered in the kitchen and is recognised by the catering trade. It was delivered by the kitchen staff and supported through the 'Hospitality and Industry Training' company.

The overall funding of this qualification was a partnership arrangement. Training of the kitchen staff to deliver the qualification was funded from the prison training budget. The prison Community Interest Company funded the learner registration fees and the Friends funded the required quality assurance costs, which involved 6 visits annually to support the delivery of the qualification.

The Friends were particularly pleased to support this qualification, as the kitchen is the only place within the prison where a full NVQ qualification can be offered and the learners can put their skills into practise post qualification. The kitchen is the only realistic working environment and the delivery of this qualification within it mirrors how such learning would be supported outside of custody. Catering is a growth area and one in which prisoners can easily secure employment.

Delivering the qualification also supported teamwork within the kitchen, allowing the building of a well-qualified and motivated team. Such an experience can only support prisoners moving into the world of work outside custody. 'Hospitality and Industry Training' also have close links with food outlets, pubs, restaurants and hotels as they deliver qualifications within them, so allowing a network of job opportunities/contacts to be available for Erlestoke prisoners when they transition to a resettlement prison in the future.

7.7 Pottery Kiln

Salisbury Cathedral is taking a leading role in the 2015 celebrations to mark the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta. The Cathedral is home to one of four original copies of the 800-year-old historic charter. Signed by King John in 1215, the document is seen as the foundation of constitutional law in England. As part of those celebrations HMP Erlestoke prisoners are creating a montage of tiles, inspired by the original medieval tiles in the Cathedral. This work, called 'Alternative Perspective' will be displayed in the South

Cloisters from May 2015 to September 2015. The involvement of HMP Erlestoke prisoners was the idea of the Canon Treasurer, the Reverend Dame Sarah Mullally DBE and was made possible by the Friends who, in September 2014, paid for the servicing of the prison kiln. Sadly it had stood unused for over a year, since the introduction of OLASS (Offender Learning and Skills Service) 4, which no longer supported pottery classes or workshops. It is hoped that now the kiln is functioning once more, that prisoners will have the opportunity to continue to use it, even when the Magan Carta project comes to an end.

7.8 Resettlement into Open Conditions Course

Some prisoners from HMP Erlestoke move to a Category D (Open Prison), which is a very different environment to that of a Category C prison. To assist with that transition, the Friends funded the 'Resettlement Into Open Conditions' (RIOCC) course that took place on Avebury unit run by Dr Jenny Clifford from PEOPLE, the resettlement charity based in Midsomer Norton, Bath. The course was in two parts comprising 12 weeks in each part and is not available anywhere else in the prison estate in England and Wales. 10 Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners (ISPs) approaching Category D status attended the course, which was a unique opportunity for them to acquire skills and knowledge relevant to a Category D environment.

The course had been running successfully at HMP Erlestoke since 2004 and has supported many ISPs, but the PEOPLE charity was no longer able to wholly fund this course from its own resources, so the Friends stepped in to assist.

7.9 Staff Award for Resettlement and Rehabilitation

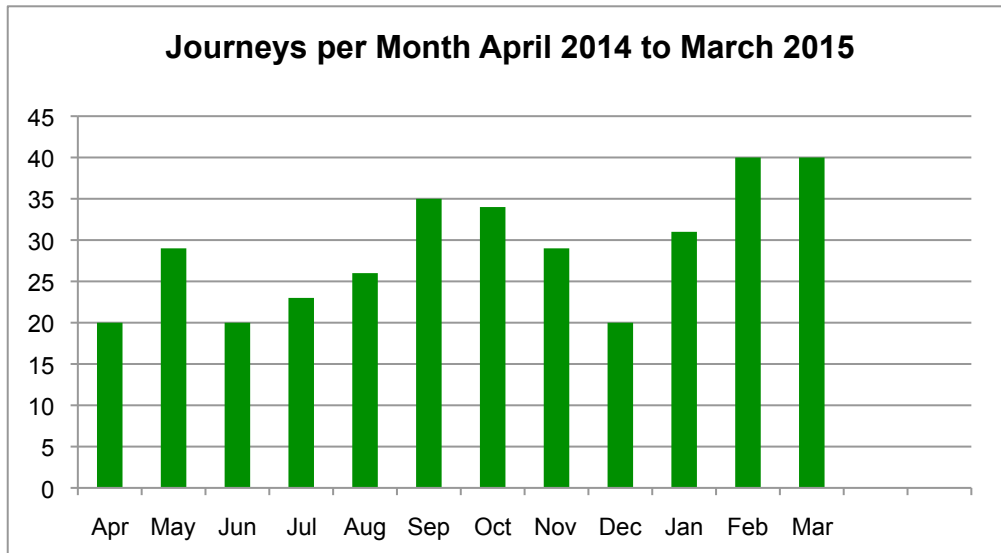
Congratulations to Felicity Bath who was awarded the Friends of Erlestoke Prison Resettlement Award in March 2015. She was recognised for her work with a life-sentenced prisoner who was approaching his Parole Board. He is nearly 70 years old and has only spent a year or two of his adult life outside of prison. Felicity treated him with care and respect, and earned his trust which enabled him to engage with her in a much more meaningful way than he had with anyone for many years. Felicity's patience helped him to gain a greater understanding of his perceived risk and how to progress through this sentence safely. As a result of Felicity's work, the prisoner attended his parole review, having significantly reduced his risk. The Parole Board commented what an impressive piece of work Felicity had undertaken and they acknowledged the progress that she had enabled the prisoner to make.

The other nominees for this award were: Steve Melville (Resettlement Officer), Mark Cole (Prison Officer) and Sophie Rutland (High Intensity SCP facilitator). The award was presented by Belinda Southwell, Chair, Friends of Erlestoke Prison at the Staff Award Ceremony.

7.10 Transport Scheme

The pilot Transport Scheme remains a very popular and growing project, despite limited advertising of the service. The aim of the scheme is to provide an affordable form of transport to assist visitors to visit as often as possible, without the worry of finding funds for high taxi fares or having to use the infrequent rural transport services. The scheme continues to be coordinated by volunteers and all drivers are volunteers. Most bookings are via email, although one or two families prefer to use the dedicated mobile number.

The graph below shows the use of the scheme over the past year. The most significant change that is emerging is the increase of families with children using the scheme. The Friends have purchased 12 child seats and one baby seat to accommodate these families.



The current demand implies a workload on drivers of at least one journey each per week. In reality several drivers do much more than that. The number of drivers has grown from 14 at the beginning of April 2014 to 18 at the end of March 2015. Of these, 12 volunteer on a regular basis. The scheme is dependent on voluntary donations from the users and although the usage of the service has increased, donations have become less consistent, with users giving what they can afford. However, all users appreciate the scheme and typical comments include:

'Thank you ever so much as I do very much appreciate everything you do and think you are all amazing people'

'I wouldn't be able to visit so often if it wasn't for your wonderful service to and from the station'

'It's so wonderful that people give up their time to run this service, please thank them for me'

'This is such a good service, you should be charging more for it'

Because of the popularity of the pilot service and the increased number of visitors with children using the service, discussions are taking place on how to manage this on a more permanent basis. With the growth in demand, it is recognised that clear, and well communicated service level agreements are necessary to better manage the expectations of the users and to ensure that the Friends can continue to provide a consistent and professional weekly service. More data will also be collected about the scheme from April 2015 including number of passengers, number of children, number of cancellations and 'no shows'.

Following the success of this pilot scheme, the Friends will work throughout 2015/16 to develop and sustain the transport scheme into the long term.

7.11 Yoga



In April 2014, four weekly yoga classes were running in the prison, three for prisoners and one for staff. All classes were delivered by a teacher from the Prison Phoenix Trust (www.theppt.org.uk), Jane Greenlees. Jane builds excellent rapport with the prisoners and has helped them to deal with insomnia, stress and neck/back ache issues. Different timings of classes have been tried to find the best fit with the prison regime.

The staff class ran for several months, but was cancelled in August due to a lack of attendance, as staff were too busy to attend. However Jane now uses this time to run a 'Questions and Answers' session, which was requested by the prisoners as they wanted time to talk more about the yoga practice and how yoga can help with specific problems. Jane also looks at yoga philosophy and chants with the group. In addition to this session, two regular yoga classes ran throughout the summer each with 10 students on a weekly basis.

Jane has dealt with attempts to 'pass items' in class and also some disruptive prisoners. Those passing items have since been excluded from the class. Classes are camera monitored and the students who love and respect their yoga time, find it upsetting that the class and Jane were abused in this way. By October 2014, only genuine and committed yoga students were attending the classes. One student, who had attended the yoga classes since the beginning of November, on leaving Erlestoke expressed his gratitude for yoga. He said when he first came to the class; he was a lost soul and not sleeping. After a couple of weeks he was sleeping and he felt that yoga has turned his life around. This is typical of the comments we have received. Many of the yoga students have written letters of thanks to Jane and the Friends and some extracts from four such letters are included below.

"Within weeks of yoga philosophies, postures and meditation, I was able to pay much more attention to my breathing, feeding into my body and mind. All this played a part in my motivation to cease destructive habits, i.e. smoking. Yoga has been a source of wisdom for me to get my mind under control. I would like to thank Jane for her dedication, patience and nurturing style of delivering the practice to people from different walks of life".

"I would like to say a big thank you for the yoga classes you have been providing. Yoga has given me a sense of inner peace and I am becoming a calmer person because of it".

"Doing yoga has kept me in a good headspace within the confines of the prison. I've learnt a new way of relaxation without harming myself, e.g. drugs or misplaced anger. In embracing my calm, I help myself and others to lead by example".

"Yoga helps with my lifestyle in prison as day to day life can be stressful with pressure from my outside life, being away from my loved ones, also prison in general, taking on interventions and the other many challenges which I face. Yoga helps with my inner peace and I feel comfortable and strong minded which keeps me positive with myself and towards my loved ones when I call home".

The Friends continue to be grateful to Jane whose unfailing commitment meant that she even offered yoga classes on Boxing Day and on the 2nd January.

The Prison Phoenix Trust (PPT) supports prisoners in their spiritual lives through meditation, yoga, silence and the breath. It recommends breath-focused stretches and meditation sensitively tailored to student's needs. Prisoners who are participating in the classes report that their yoga practice helps them cope with anxiety and depression, allowing them to sleep better and to find something in themselves that they like. Several now continue their yoga practice outside of the class, in their cells on a daily basis.

7.12 Music Therapy

Following an approach from one of the prison Chaplains, the Friends purchased a set of electronic drums and a headset to facilitate 'music therapy' sessions for prisoners who are participating in difficult programmes and interventions. This is an area whereby prisoners can express themselves and deal with emotions in a safe environment. The Friends strongly believe that programmes and interventions do assist to address reoffending behaviour but due to the soul searching and acceptance of their crimes and their impact, there is a need for a 'medium' and a safe space to express emotions and stresses. Due to the multifaith and inclusive nature of Chaplaincy they are able to provide a safe space and the opportunity to explore these emotions through music.

'Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life'. Berthold Auerbach (German-Jewish poet and author)

7.13 Support to Older Prisoners

In October 2014, the Friends received a request from a prisoner who was seeking financial support to purchase resources for a new drop-in centre in the prison called the 'Snug' for the over 65s. In recent years there has been an increase in prisoners who are either over 65, retired or incapacitated through disability or illness. At any time there are approximately 75-80 prisoners who are over 50 of whom there are between 14-16 that are over 65 or incapacitated.

'The Snug' is located in the Education Department on the ground floor to allow ease of access to the room. It opened formally on 25 September 2014 and is open every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. A steady group attends and continues to promote and encourage all who are eligible to come and take part. The purpose of this facility is to give this group of prisoners an opportunity to get off their wings, come to a different environment and socialise with their peers. There are a number of activities in which they engage from simply talking over a cup of tea, playing cards, board games, watching a film/documentary or entering into some lively debating!

7.14 Leonardos Driving to Employment

Following the demand for the Leonardo's Driving to Employment course that the Friends supported last year, we supported a further course this year. The course is unchanged and focuses on three main areas:

- Supporting those who have never taken a driving test to do this
- Supporting those with a driving ban to regain their licence
- Supporting all drivers to improve their skills and so become better drivers.

Many prisoners in custody have never taken a driving test. Some of these were driving illegally and some are restricted in their search for work because they cannot drive. Some, in their search for work use a friend or family member's car, with no licence, leading to further offending. A number of prisoners, although not in custody for a driving related offence have, because of the nature of their offence, had their licence to drive removed; this includes drug related offences. Also many prisoners have never received driving lessons, being taught by friends or family members. While they may have passed their driving test, in many cases

their skills and perceptions, especially after a period in custody benefit from improvement.

The Friends again recognised that the lack of a licence, poor driving skills, inability to regain a licence and lack of knowledge about how to take things forward on release, can only be detrimental to successful resettlement and re integration. We therefore funded a further Leonardos 4 day course for ten prisoners during this reporting period. There will no longer be a requirement to deliver these courses at HMP Erlestoke as this type of activity has now become the responsibility of the resettlement prisons.

8. Fundraising

8.1 Bridge Event - May 2014



Thank you to the 48 people who joined the Friends at the Hospital of St John, Heytesbury, near Warminster in May 2014 for the Bridge and Tea event. There were 12 tables of 4 players each, some of whom played 'Chatty Bridge' and the more adventurous who prefer to move tables played 'Cheerful Chicago'. Trustees and volunteers from the Friends donated the tea and cakes, which were provided as part of the ticket price of £60 per table. Thank you also to Krys Berry, who led the bridge playing, lent the Friends all the bridge table cloths, score and playing cards and kept everyone on track throughout the afternoon.

8.2 Christmas Concert – December 2014



Two years ago, the Friends hosted a concert in the beautiful Edington Priory Church and once again we chose this venue for our main fundraising event of 2014. Sir Christopher Benson, one of the charity's patrons, kindly sponsored the event. This time the main attraction was the Wessex Choir who sang a medley of traditional,

modern and Christmas songs supported by the local Bratton Silver Band. Over 200 people came to the event and enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies during the interval. Thank you to everyone who joined us at the event and to all the volunteers from the Church and the Friends who worked tirelessly to make the evening a huge success.



8.3 Drama as a fundraiser

The drama showcases led by Rebecca Cochran-Patrick (section 7.4.2) have proved to be a good source of income for the Friends. They are an excellent way of raising the profile of the charity and the prison to those who have not previously come into contact with the prison estate.

8.4 Easyfundraising

The Friends continue to encourage all supporters to donate via www.easyfundraising.org.uk when shopping online. Many retailers will make automatic donations to us, at no extra cost to yourself, if you select the 'Friends of Erlestoke Prison' as your preferred charity.

8.5 Fundraising – significant donations 2014/15

The Friends would particularly like to thank Sir Christopher Benson and the Brewster Maude Charitable Trust who made donations to the charity of £1,000 or more.

9. Financial Review

This is our third Annual Report and we are in the fourth year of the charity's existence. We spent £20,425 just above the top end of our forecast and raised £14,420. In comparison to the cash flow analysis we conducted last year and as predicted our fundraising has been lower; this reflects a conscious decision to have one less major event, an exceptional year in 13/14 and the need to reduce reserve levels. It is difficult to accurately forecast outflow in FY15/16 but with budgeted and in year projects we are likely to spend around £17,500. We forecast that our fundraising for FY 2015/16 will need to match the figures this year to maintain a sensible balance between reserves and expenditure.

Our fundraising is a combination of personal donations, the proceeds of fundraising events and organisation/trust fund donations and grants for specific projects. Our expenditure is directly linked to the charity aims.

Our draft reserve policy is to ensure that we have sufficient funds to cope with a 25% drop in fundraising without impacting key projects for 6 months. Our reserve level is now in line with this policy; we have for some time been seeking to commence a second large-scale project but for reasons described elsewhere in the report uncertainty has affected our ability to commit funds. At present we have a current account and an instant access savings account earning a basic level of interest. Our investment policy is under review to ensure that, when market conditions allow, we obtain a slightly better rate of return on our current reserve.

Section 9.1 shows the Receipts and Payments Accounts from the 1st April 2014 to the 31st March 2015.

9.1 Receipts and Payments Accounts: 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
Receipts				
Fundraising income	8,189		8,189	12,413
Grants				5,000
Donations Received	5,282		5,282	16,321
Gift Aid Income				
Investment income	17		17	10
Sales of Equipment				
Just Giving	691		691	
<i>Sub total (gross income for AR)</i>	14,180		14,180	33,744
Total Receipts	14,180		14,180	33,744
Payments				
Housing Support Worker	4,931		4,931	10,808
Drawing				111
Music equipment	653		653	3,390
Garden				750
CAB	1,716		1,716	1,716
Fundraising expenses	1,820		1,820	1,578
Driving/Leonardos	1,000		1,000	1,000
Mosaic	676		676	95
P.E.O.P.L.E. RIOC *	1,748		1,748	
Licences				
Just Giving Subscriptions	216		216	216
Prison Library	83		83	555
Yoga	1,997		1,997	808
Transport Scheme	486		486	23
Drama Projects	4,350		4,350	23
Art support	486		486	123
November Trophy				26
Sundries	264		264	16
<i>Sub total</i>	20,425		20,425	21,238
<i>Total payments</i>	20,425		20,425	21,238
<i>Net of receipts (payments)</i>	-6,246		-6,246	12,506
Cash funds last year end	40,549		40,549	28,043
Cash funds this year end	34,303		34,303	40,549

10. Public Benefit Statement

Most prisoners will eventually be released into our communities and will have to re-establish themselves back into society. Unless HM Prison Service makes effective interventions whilst the men are in custody it is highly unlikely that they will change their behaviour and many will revert back to old habits and patterns upon release, which leads to re-offending and more victims of crime.

It is well documented that the risk of men re-offending is much reduced if they have a home and a job upon release, and have been supported throughout their sentence by friends and family. HM Prison Service works to help the men in these areas, but with budget cuts and staff shortages, there is a gap between what could be provided and what is actually provided.

Any rehabilitated prisoner, who becomes a law-abiding citizen, will provide benefit to the community, particularly if he is employed and properly supporting his family. The charity will work with HMP Erlestoke to help prisoners take responsibility for themselves and their future outside of the prison. The charity will do this by encouraging prisoners to actively plan and prepare for their future by developing a good work ethic, face up to their crimes and their offending behaviours and take the opportunity to educate and develop themselves whilst in custody.

The charity offers volunteering opportunities for the local community to work with the prison to help achieve its aims. Many people in the communities around HMP Erlestoke view the prison as an 'unknown institution' where 'bad' people are sent for punishment. The Friends of Erlestoke Prison aim to raise awareness of prison life and build understanding of how many of the prisoners ended up in prison, often through mental illness, drug/alcohol addiction, abusive childhoods and poor education (to name a few). Prison is not a punishment – being placed within an institution, having your life 'managed' by someone else – withdrawal of freedom is the punishment. But prison is also an opportunity to change. The Friends are realistic and know that even with powerful interventions, some prisoners will not change. However, if the interventions work for a percentage of the prison population, communities will benefit from the integration of non-violent, employable men with skills and trades who are able to support themselves and their families. People are often prejudiced because of what they don't know – as more locals become involved with the prison and understand what it is trying to do, they may become more accepting of ex-prisoners, particularly those who want to transform their lives.

11. The Year Ahead

11.1 Governance

The Friends of Erlestoke Prison will continue to work alongside the prison management team to align their work with the strategies and goals of HMP Erlestoke as a rehabilitation prison. The Trustees will ensure that the Trustee and volunteer skills, knowledge and experience support the aims of the charity and that additional expertise is always sought when needed. Strong teamwork with prison staff and our volunteers is

critical as is partnership working with the organisations that deliver our service. The annual strategy meetings, in which the Trustees set direction for the next financial year will continue, and the next meeting will be scheduled for early 2016.

11.2 Sustainability

The Friends continue to strive towards a successful and sustainable, but flexible charity business model, which not only ensures the charity's long term survival, but also which can be modified by other prisons to establish similar 'Friends' charitable organisations. Innovation is key, as the charity cannot always rely on all the good ideas coming from within the prison. It is important to look further afield, benchmark the work of other prisons and other charities/organisations working within the prison estate. Many projects require support and input from prison staff and the Friends must continue to find creative ways to provide the services, which deliver real benefits without causing disruption to the prison regime.

It is recognised, as the charity matures, that more focus is required on evaluating the work that we do to ensure that the prisoners and their families are benefiting from the investments we make in their futures. This needs to include quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate the impact of our work in the prison and will include feedback from prisoners, their families, our partner organisations and prison staff. Some of this feedback is included in this report, but if the charity is to be sustained into the future, evaluation of our work will become critical to attract new funding streams.

Locally, sustainability remains a key concern, particularly in the current economic climate and with the significant growth in the number of charitable and voluntary organisations in Wiltshire, all seeking funds and support for their valuable work with vulnerable people. The Friends must explore previously untapped sources of funding to ensure that their important work continues. This will include improving the overall marketing activity for the charity.

11.3 Training

The Trustees continue to keep their knowledge of the Criminal Justice System current and to develop their skills as Trustees in the areas of charity governance and fundraising. Prison management staff and members of the Independent Monitoring Board join Trustee/volunteer meetings to keep the Friends up to date about HMP Erlestoke and the current challenges.

11.4 Work areas for 2015/16

The Friends aim to concentrate their work in 2015/16 in the following areas:

- Support to prisoners' families and children
- Rehabilitation and therapy through drama, art, music and yoga
- Education and skills development
- Innovative rehabilitation techniques which inspire prisoners to change behaviours and transform their lives

12. More information

If you would like more information about the work of the Friends, please visit our website: www.friendsoferlstokeprison.com or email info@friendsoferlstokeprison.com

Thank you for your continued support and interest in our charity.

The Trustees

Friends of Erlestoke Prison

August 2015