



THE FRIENDS of ERLESTOKE PRISON

ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016

Date of report: August 2016

HMP Erlestoke
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1. Chair's report

Welcome to the fourth Annual Report from the Friends of Erlestoke Prison. The Friends have continued to operate within a rapidly changing Criminal Justice System, with many of those changes in the Prison System significantly impacting HMP Erlestoke. The Prison is now an established rehabilitation prison (as from January 2015), is running a successful family interventions unit, has introduced new violence reduction and thinking skills programmes and has been preparing to become a smoke free facility from May 2016. Staff shortages, changes in responsibilities, commissioning of new service providers and the problems associated with drugs smuggled into the Prison, (particularly SPICE) are just some of the challenges facing the establishment, but the Prison continues to welcome and encourage the work of the Friends.



The Friends have maintained focus on programmes to enhance the rehabilitation agenda and the development of our transport scheme for visitors, which is now part of the overall visitor experience to the Prison. We are delighted that Carol Part joined the Friends' team as our Transport Scheme and Volunteer Co-ordinator in March 2016. Carol was already a volunteer driver, extremely familiar with the scheme and brimming with ideas to improve and develop the scheme. The scheme now has over 20 volunteer drivers, all of whom I would like to thank for giving up their valuable time to provide lifts to visitors, who otherwise would struggle to visit their loved ones on a regular basis.

Sadly we said goodbye to Lynda Wearn (trustee) and her husband Dave Wearn who moved out of the area so could not continue to build on the excellent foundation, which they had created for the transport scheme. We also said goodbye to Juliet Cooper who, like Lynda, had been a trustee from the launch of the Charity. Juliet had been instrumental in raising significant funds for the Friends and was a strong board member. Both Juliet and Lynda will be sorely missed. However, we are pleased to welcome Simon Petchey as a new trustee. Simon has significant Independent Monitoring Board experience, both in prisons and immigration centres. Simon will focus on governance of our charity.

We have continued with our drama and yoga programmes this year. Drama was not without its' difficulties due to the transient nature of the Prisoner population and the challenges of fitting sessions into the Prison regime, but our wonderful drama teacher has persisted to overcome these and will start afresh in this financial year. Yoga continues to be a popular programme, so much so, that we are now looking into providing Tai Chi in the coming year. We were also pleased to support the Julian House Bike Project this year; an organisation which sells bikes and maintenance services whilst creating opportunities for marginalised groups to train, gain confidence and make progress towards independence and employment.

We held two forums to elicit ideas and comments from prisoners as to the work of the Charity. Many comments focused on suggestions to improve the visitor experience, which we will try to address working with the Prison and Barnardos.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us this year; our volunteers, donors, patrons, committee members, prison staff, partners, my fellow trustees and all those who bid for items in our Christmas auction and those who came to play bridge (again) in Heytesbury in March. Without you, our work in the Prison would not be possible.

Let's make 2016/2017 an even better year, supporting the Prison to build a rehabilitative culture and improving the overall visitor experience for prisoners' families and friends.

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) Simon Petchey (Governance) - (joined September 2015)
Juliet Cooper (stepped down June 2015)
Lynda Wearn (stepped down March 2016)
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, one of which is a family interventions unit and one is dedicated to intervention programmes. The total operational capacity of the Prison is around 524. When men are released from Erlestoke, they move to a resettlement prison, close to their home or close to where they will begin their lives after prison. They are then supported by local Community Resettlement Companies (CRCs) who provide through the gate resettlement services. This change was effective from 1st May 2015.

The Friends of Erlestoke Prison helps to support prisoners with the challenges of rehabilitation and changing behaviour whilst in custody 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

4.1 Trustees and Patrons

The Charity has five Trustees, one Royal Patron, five Patrons, and a small committee of enthusiastic local volunteers. There are no paid permanent staff. The Charity has one independent service provider who has been contracted for a period of one year to run the Transport Scheme (see also section 6.9)



The five Trustees are all volunteers and two have been with the Charity since start up. Initial recruitment was achieved through the Chair and Secretary's personal network of interested individuals. Going forward, 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

Sadly we said goodbye to two long serving trustees in this reporting period. Thank you to Juliet Cooper who was a trustee for 4 years, from the launch of the Charity to June 2015, when she decided to step down from the role to focus on her work at HMP Guys Marsh. Juliet will be missed, particularly for her fundraising work most notably on 2 Christmas Concerts, raising considerable sums of money for the Charity. Thank you also to Lynda Wearn who was a trustee for 5 years, again from the launch of the Charity to March 2016. Lynda and her family are moving out of the area and she hopes to now support prisons in the north of England. The Friends Transport Scheme was Lynda's brainchild and together with her husband, they worked tirelessly to establish the foundations of the scheme, which has grown from strength to strength over the last 3 years.

We are pleased to welcome Simon Petchey, who joined as a trustee in September 2015, responsible for Governance. As the Charity has grown, it was decided that we needed a trustee to manage how we control our charity, including, for example, processes and procedures, legal requirements, safeguarding, insurance and data protection. Simon has many years experience with HMP Erlestoke, having been Chair of the Independent Monitoring Board for two separate terms.

The Charity is currently advertising for two new trustees; one of whom will focus on fundraising and one on co-coordinating projects within the Prison. It is proving difficult to recruit new trustees, particularly via recruitment websites; networking still seems to be the most effective trustee recruitment mechanism.

The Trustees hold regular meetings (approximately every 6 weeks) to ensure that they remain up to date with 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.

4.2 Prisoner forum

There have been two prisoner forums held in this reporting period, one in July 2015 and the second in March 2016. At each forum, representatives from the Charity met with a group of prisoners who were asked to provide feedback to the Charity and ideas for new projects and initiatives.

Nine prisoners attended the July 2015 forum with Belinda Southwell, Frank Smith and Vicky Bull. Six prisoners attended that March 2016 forum with Angela Hughes and Judith Squarey. Some of the ideas discussed are listed below:

Visitor Experience

- Inspired by the Storybook Dads concept, a suggestion was made for a video entitled “A day in the Life of ...” showing cells, workplaces, the gym and the chapel to show visitors a typical day in prison.
- Currently only men in the Family Interventions Unit are allowed Family Days as part of their Family Man course. In the past these were open to the main prison population; a request was made to offer the opportunity to all prisoners with families.
- It was pointed out that there are only 30 places available for each visit i.e.120 per week for over 500 prisoners and some people are finding it difficult to book visits even a week in advance. One prisoner referenced PSI16/2011 ‘Providing Visits and Services to Visitors’ which states that every prisoner is entitled to a visit every 2 weeks including a weekend visit every 4 weeks. Having no Sunday visits makes it very difficult. A request was made to reinstate Sunday Visits (even if only ½ day).
- There was a suggestion that there could be photos in the visits hall of men working in various aspects (this could be ‘backs only’ if this is more acceptable).
- The men commented that the transport scheme is much appreciated and is well used, with acknowledgement that families are pleased to have a phone number to contact as well as the email address.
- There was general appreciation of the upgrading of the facilities in the Visits Hall and approval that there is now more space as some of the furniture has been removed. There was a consensus of opinion that the wait outside the Prison for families is simply not acceptable. There was general agreement that the portacabin outside the main gate could easily be renovated and the Prisoners could not understand why nothing has yet happened as this subject has been raised multiple times. It was suggested that the Friends could improve the walls in the search cabin and make them more child friendly.
- One man suggested that the Friends could provide activities/toys for the older children, i.e. from 6 years upwards as all the toys in the crèche are for younger age groups. He commented that the children get bored quite quickly especially after a bad experience of waiting for a long time to get into the Prison; consequently they start rushing about and making it difficult for the adults to hold a conversation.

Editors Note: The health and safety issues forbidding the use of the playground next to the Visitor Centre continue to be a source of frustration; the playground remains closed to families visiting the Prison.

However, improving the overall visitor experience is now a priority for the Prison, which is reviewing options for making the booking process more user friendly, changing visit days, providing better information to visitors, making communication with the Prison easier, eliminating long wait times outside the gates and improving the overall facilities for visitors (including children). The Friends are in discussion with the Prison and Barnardos to identify areas where we can potentially support the improvements.

Farms and Gardens

- Those who work in the gardens were frustrated by the amount of wastage of the vegetables they grow as they could be sold near the visitors centre. This issue has now been solved through the launch of the Erlestoke Shop in October 2015, which sells not only vegetables, but also cakes, plants and garden products made by prisoners.

Greetings Cards

- There was a complaint about the lack of choice of greetings cards when ordering from the current supplier. One man said he had sent the same Mother's Day card for 3 years and his mother had commented on this. It was agreed that there is an abundance of artistic/graphic design talent within Erlestoke and this could be harnessed to create card designs that could be produced/sold in the Prison and also in the Erlestoke shop.

Quiet Space in the Chapel

- There was a suggestion for a quiet area within the Chapel for people to go for reflection and silence. The men acknowledged the sensory garden and they knew it had been funded by the Friends, but pointed out that the garden is not suitable during wet/cold weather months. There was appreciation voiced for the Chapel and its staff.

Local Community

- One man suggested that the Prison should have greater interaction with the local community. There used to be an over 50s walking football match with the local community which was very popular. He suggested that the Friends could sponsor medals or a buffet tea after the match.

Drama, Yoga and Art Therapy

- One of the men at the forum was the Equalities Orderly. He suggested that a series of short plays about equality issues in prisons, for example, sexuality or religion, could be produced, made into a DVD and viewed by everyone in the Prison. The local community could also be invited to watch them. He said that he has already put in a proposal to the Prison management team.
- There was a request for some art therapy/programmes.

Editors Note: The Friends are currently investigating the feasibility of these ideas with the Prison. Feedback will be given to the Prisoners via the Prisoner newspaper 'Paper Soldier'.

4.3 Governance

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

During the year a number of nationally known charities attracted adverse comment in the media for significance lapses in the way they managed their activities and funds. While the Friends is at the opposite end of the Charity spectrum in terms of size and range of activities, it has continued to grow. The Trustees therefore decided that it would be appropriate to assign specific responsibility for corporate governance matters to a nominated Trustee (Simon Petchey).

Since Simon's appointment was made last year the Friends have taken a number of actions to strengthen our governance, albeit incurring some unavoidable costs in the process. Aside from dealing with day-to-day issues such as rules relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, the Trustees have taken the following measures:

- Agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding with the HMP Erlestoke Governor in August 2015 to order and clarify our relationship with the Prison. This document also serves as a procedural introduction to prison management and staff when they first work with the Friends, and as a tool for specifying the way in which projects and requests for funds must be initiated.
- Registering with the Information Commissioner's Office so that we conform to current and planned data protection legislation.
- Engaging with a leading charity insurance company to ensure that all trustees, employees and volunteers, as well as those using our services are fully covered against risks such as employers' and public liability and other common business risks. The insurance, which comes as a package, also protects the Charity against less traditional risks including the full range of information technology and reputational damage hazards.
- Finally, the Friends have started to develop a set of procedures to cover our major activities, including our transport service and project management. These ensure that members of the Charity have guidance and a standard approach to our work.

Our charity governance is ongoing work in progress: as the role of the Charity evolves, so our processes and procedures will keep pace. Our volunteers, who give their time and effort, and our many financial sponsors large and small, can then have confidence in the way we repay their commitment to our activities.

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.

5. Marketing and Publicity

Advertisements were placed for two new trustees and the Transport Co-ordinator on recruitment websites. Volunteer drivers for the Transport Scheme were advertised in local church and community magazines.

The Prison Governor has given several talks to local organisations (Women's Institutes and local societies), all of who have donated money to the Charity to thank him for his time.

Articles about the Friends continue to be 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 has been upgraded and re-launched including a new look and feel and additional content. Thank you to Dave Hughes, whose technical and marketing skills brought the new site to life.



The screenshot shows the homepage of 'The Friends of Erlestoke Prison'. The header features a logo with a sunflower and the text 'The Friends of Erlestoke Prison' and 'Royal Patron HRH the Duchess of Cornwall'. A navigation menu includes 'Home', 'About Us', 'Volunteering', 'News', 'Photos', 'Donate', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'About the Friends of Erlestoke Prison' and describes the charity's mission to support offenders with resettlement and rehabilitation, listing five key projects: preparing men for release, helping offenders face the impact of their crimes, helping offenders develop skills for employment, bringing fathers closer to their partners and children, and raising local awareness. The right column contains two news items: 'Transport Scheme and Volunteer Co-ordinator Appointed' and 'Bridge and Tea Event'. Below the main content, there are two sections: 'Trustee Vacancies' and 'For prisoners' families'.

About the Friends of Erlestoke Prison
The Friends of Erlestoke Prison helps to support offenders with the challenges of resettlement and rehabilitation. We fund projects which:

- Prepare men for release
- Help offenders face up to the impact of their crimes
- Help offenders develop skills which will help them to find employment
- Bring fathers closer to their partners and children
- Raise local awareness about the work of the prison

Transport Scheme and Volunteer Co-ordinator Appointed
We are pleased to welcome Carol Part to the Friends of Erlestoke Prison team. Carol has recently joined us in the role of Transport and Volunteer Co-ordinator. Carol will manage enquiries and bookings, co-ordinate our existing volunteer drivers and recruit/train new drivers to support the scheme.

Bridge and Tea Event
Thank you to everyone who joined our fundraising event in Heytesbury, near Warminster in March 2016. We raised over £1100 which will contribute to the running of our transport scheme for families.

Trustee Vacancies
The Friends are currently looking for two new trustees to join the team. If you are interested and would like to learn more about the roles, please [email us](#).

For prisoners' families
We are running a transport service on visit days, from Devizes bus stops and/or Westbury train station to HMP Erlestoke. To access this service please contact Carol with the date and time the lift is required, the number of persons and where you would like to be picked up.

Fig 1 - Screen Shot of www.friendsoferlestokeprison.com homepage as of April 2016

6. Projects

6.1 Bookstart and Storybook Dads



The Friends continue to support Bookstart, which encourages dads and children to read and play together during prison visits by making Bookstart packs available to families on visiting days. 47 packs of books and crayons were provided in bags made by prisoners.

The Friends also supported the Storybook Dads initiative this year. The Prison has been creating CDs of Dads reading stories to their children for several years (46 in this period); these CDs help to maintain the vital



emotional bond between parent and child. This year, the Friends purchased a video camera and memory cards for the library, which now enables the Prison to make DVDs of prisoners reading to their children, which they can watch at home. This provision has been offered to men on the Family Man course in the Family Interventions Unit and will soon be offered generally to every prisoner with children or grandchildren.

This is an important initiative for the Friends; it is reported that '50% of all prisoners lose contact with their families. Those that maintain contact are up to 6 times less likely to re-offend'. For more information visit: www.storybookdads.org.uk

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

The Friends had been funding a CAB worker who facilitated drop in sessions and private meetings during 2 visit days per month. The take up of this service slowly reduced and by April 2015 there were no families approaching the advisor. The Trustees decided that this was no longer a viable activity to support, as there were no apparent needs from the families.

6.3 Drama

2015 started well with our drama teacher Rebecca Cochran-Patrick, managing to recruit over 20 prisoners from all around the Prison. Two groups were formed and each group received tuition on Friday mornings. Rebecca hoped to uncover hidden talents in addition to helping offenders with their much needed communication skills. Sadly, after this promising start, the sessions were disrupted either by participants being moved to another prison at short notice or onto a course where they were no longer available to attend drama on a Friday morning. By December 2015 Rebecca decided that the lack of continuity and general disruption meant that she could not put on another Drama showcase, and it would have to be postponed.

A further challenge was that RAPt who had supported Rebecca wholeheartedly in her drama work and who ran the courses in Silbury wing did not have their contract renewed. Numbers of participants in drama classes tailed off and by early March 2016 Rebecca had to suspend her classes until a way forward could be found, which would ensure that the offenders who signed up for drama would not be removed from the class, allowing rehearsals to continue uninterrupted. The Trustees are working with Rebecca and the Head of Education to reinstate drama sessions in September 2016 with a more stable group of participants.

6.4 Mental Health Awareness Training

As part of the development of the Family Intervention Unit, the Friends funded a trial session on Mental Health awareness for offenders, to assist them in understanding adolescent mental health and being able to offer greater support to their families. The session incorporated helping people to recognise signs and symptoms of depression, anxiety/anxiety disorders, self harm and how to help someone, if they are having an anxiety attack or learning some coping strategies if they have depression or if they self harm. Consideration is now being given to introducing this as a regular session, possibly two to three times a year.

6.5 Support to Psychology



Before the closure of Shepton Mallet Prison, the Psychology department purchased two 'Panaboards' (interactive white boards) for training purposes. These were moved to HMP Erlestoke when Shepton Mallet closed 3 years ago. The boards were damaged but still partly working so the facilitators used them rather than flip charts. Use of a Panaboard benefits group members as it assists those with reading and writing difficulties, dyslexia, or sight problems. It also enables the presentation of material in a more colourful and interesting way, which encourages better group engagement. The Friends purchased one new board to support the delivery of programmes run by Psychology, for example: Self Change and Healthy Relationships Programme.

The Friends also purchased team-building materials and equipment, which are used to help prepare offenders for the high intensity group work in the Self Change and Health Relationship Programmes. Such team building sessions have proved highly beneficial in settling the group and the facilitator, avoiding early dropouts and building bridges amongst participants. Facilitators can also identify possible problems with the group and plan, at an early stage, to work on these.



6.6 Art Materials

RAPt (Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust - www.rapt.org.uk) approached the Friends to request funding for art materials to support prisoners on drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes and those who have completed the programme and require aftercare. We agreed and purchased paint, paper, crayons, pencils, fabric, palettes, water pots, brushes, charcoal, spatulas and glue to support the art therapy.

6.7 Magna Carta Project

Last year, we reported that Salisbury Cathedral was taking a leading role in the 2015 celebrations to mark the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta. As part of those celebrations HMP Erlestoke prisoners created a montage of tiles, inspired by the original medieval tiles in the Cathedral. This work, called 'Alternative Perspective' was 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.

Workshops were held at the Prison to explore Magna Carta themes of justice, law and power. 26 prisoners then made sketches before turning the themes into individual terracotta tiles. The sketchbooks were also

exhibited in the cloisters to demonstrate how the ideas for the tiles were developed. As a result of this project, the Prison appointed a pottery teacher who has been in post since August 2015.

Elizabeth Williams, Learning & Skills Manager, HMP Erlestoke said:

“This isn’t just an art project, its implications are far broader with the art sessions functioning as a forum in which we managed to get the Prisoners to really think about issues such as human rights and wrongs - and the justice system. The feedback we have got has been powerful and the men have engaged wholeheartedly. It has been a learning experience for them and for us.”

(Source - Salisbury Cathedral website, June 2015)

6.8 Resettlement into Open Conditions Course (RIOC)

In 2015, the Friends funded this unique course for indeterminate and long-term determinate prisoners. The course helps prisoners to make the transition from the Category C environment of HMP Erlestoke to the very different environment of a Category D open prison. The feedback from the Prisoners and the Prison management team was very positive and the Friends decided to fund another course this year for 10 more prisoners. Run again by Dr Jenny Clifford from PEOPLE, the resettlement charity based near Bath, the course was in two parts comprising 12 weeks in each part. It is not available anywhere else in the Prison estate in England and Wales.

Part one of the course addresses the expectations and adjustments required when making the move to a Category D establishment, for example; matters pertaining to drug and alcohol misuse, time in the community, hostel provision and housing issues, relationships, finance and money management, welfare benefits, daily living, skills assessments, CV and employment, disclosure of offences. Part two covers employment including interviewing skills, self-employment, legal requirements and business plans. Healthy eating and keeping well are also considered. The course is entirely voluntary. Depending upon the feedback from this course, the Friends may consider a third year of funding.

6.9 Transport Scheme



The Friends first piloted the Transport Scheme in 2013 with a volunteer co-ordinator from our trustee group, Lynda Wearn. The scheme has grown in popularity and demand for the service has steadily increased. Last year (April 2014 to March 2015), we reported that our volunteer drivers made 330 journeys taking over 460 visitors from Westbury Station or Devizes Market Place to Erlestoke Prison.

The Scheme has become such a success that it has now been established as a permanent service. It is proving to be invaluable help for visitors to the Prison, most especially for those with children.

Enabling regular contact between prisoners and their families is at the heart of the work of The Friends and the Transport Scheme allows many visitors to make more regular visits, particularly those who could not otherwise afford to pay for taxi journeys from Westbury or Devizes.

During this reporting period, more detailed information was recorded regarding the number of visitor

passengers (including children under 12); the number of volunteer journeys; the number of late cancellations or those who do not arrive as arranged (No Show).

STATISTICS APRIL 2015 to MARCH 2016				
	Visitor Passengers	(Inc Children under 12)	Volunteer Journeys	Late Cancel or No Show
APRIL	63	24	51	1
MAY	53	22	46	2
JUNE	52	11	37	1
JULY	72	21	52	2
AUGUST	45	12	28	7
SEPTEMBER	34	8	31	4
OCTOBER	51	16	34	2
NOVEMBER	63	19	35	4
DECEMBER	33	6	26	0
JANUARY	62	20	37	0
FEBRUARY	57	23	38	0
MARCH	68	23	50	0
TOTAL ANNUAL	653	(205)	465	23

The Trustees are immensely grateful to the team of Volunteer Drivers, which has now grown to 21, who give so generously of their time, when they already have busy lives. The Transport Scheme could not operate without them.

Many visitors travel long distances and some come from as far afield as Manchester, The Midlands, London, Wales or East Anglia. Such journeys, by public transport, make for a very long day, especially for young children and the consideration and thoughtfulness of the Volunteer Drivers is hugely valued.

We ask passengers for a small donation for each journey and although this is not a requirement, many passengers are pleased to make a contribution towards the costs of the Scheme.

Throughout the year, we receive messages of thanks and the following extracts show how much the Scheme is appreciated:

- *“I would just like to say thank you so much to you and your drivers, you are all such lovely people and I wouldn't have been able to keep up my relationship through the visits if it wasn't for you so thank you so very much, I'm so grateful.”*
- *“I just wanted to thank both of you for Saturday it was really appreciated - your team are doing great work”.*
- *“How would we manage without you – we could not visit if you did not have the Transport Service.”*

Towards the end of 2015, Lynda and Dave Wearn, the Voluntary Co-ordinators who inspired the concept of the original Pilot Scheme, were making plans to move away from Wiltshire and left the Friends in March 2016.

The Transport Scheme had become so well established that the Trustees decided to appoint a part-time Co-ordinator. Carol Part took up the post in February 2016. She now ensures the smooth running of the Scheme and acts as the liaison link between the passengers, the Volunteer Drivers and the Trustees.

6.10 Yoga



Yoga continues to be a popular activity for those who attend one of the three courses provided by Jane Greenless from the Prison Phoenix Trust. Two of these classes are for offenders and one for staff members. Jane is a popular and skilled teacher who gives men and women who may be feeling stressed, peace of mind and a general feeling of wellbeing. This is clear from testimonials and letters the Friends receive from the participants. Attendance at the classes is not always consistent as yoga, like any activity in the Prison is adversely affected when staff numbers are stretched to the limit. A class may suddenly be closed for security reasons or because staff have other duties or are called to an incident. Also wing posters advertising the yoga classes are sometimes removed.

Despite these challenges, the Friends have continued and will continue to fund yoga in the Prison as the benefits outweigh the logistical issues. We are grateful to Jane for her dedication and hard work on behalf of the offenders and staff. Knowing that Bank Holidays and Christmas can be stressful times for offenders, Jane has continued with her teaching over those periods.

Below are extracts from offender's letters of thanks for the classes and show the impact that yoga can have:

"Being a 65 year old, IPP prisoner and past head and neck cancer patient, I find them (yoga classes) particularly helpful in both managing prison stress and health anxiety over cancer reoccurrence"

"At first I found yoga uncomfortable, physically and emotionally. Jane was really encouraging and welcoming. The first benefit I noticed was that after a session I didn't feel so resentful, bitter, angry and anti-social, I felt quite pleasant and serene for the rest of the day. It is now the highlight of my week."

"I think it is amazing that the Friends of Erlestoke fund my yoga classes. It's quite baffling and extremely heartwarming that there is a group of people who care enough about people like me to give us this gift and believe that we have the potential to embrace it. You have helped me more than I can explain."

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. www.theppt.org.uk

the event in March 2016. Thank you again to the 48 people who joined the Friends and played either 'Chatty Bridge' or 'Cheerful Chicago'. Trustees and volunteers from the Friends donated the tea and cakes, which were provided as part of the ticket price. Thank you once again 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 Fundraising – significant donations 2015/2016

The Friends would particularly like to thank the Inchcape Foundation, the Hiscox Foundation, John Bush and the Drove Trust, all of whom made significant donations to the Charity in this reporting period.

8. Financial Review

This is our fourth Annual Report and we are in the fifth year of the Charity's existence. We spent £17,001 just below our forecast and raised £15,615. Our fundraising has been steady this year with two good specific events, i.e. the Christmas Auction and Raffle and the Bridge and Tea event. We have increased spending on projects slightly but the departure of our dedicated Housing Support Worker reduced outgoings. This will be balanced in the next financial year by contracting a part-time Transport Scheme Coordinator.

It is difficult to accurately forecast outflow in financial year 2016/2017 but with budgeted and in-year projects we are likely to spend around £19,000. We forecast that our fundraising for next year will be in line with or a bit below the figure for this year but this is consistent with slightly reducing the size of our reserve.

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 and our reserve level is now in line with this policy. We currently 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.

Having taken advice on our reserves level, the Charity deferred collecting Gift Aid from HMRC in financial year 2015/16 but will be making a multi year claim in financial year 2016/2017.

8.1 Receipts and Payments Accounts: 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
Receipts				
Fundraising income	11,434		11,434	8,189
Grants				
Donations Received	3,921		3,921	5,282
Gift Aid Income				
Investment income				17
Sales of Equipment				
Just Giving	260		260	691
<i>Sub total (gross income for AR)</i>	15,615		15,615	14,180
Total Receipts	15,615		15,615	14,180
Payments				
Housing Support Worker				4,931
Julian House Bike Project	3,983		3,983	
Music equipment				653
Transport Co-ordinator	653		653	
Insurance	459		459	
CAB	468		468	1,716
AV equipment	2,335		2,335	
Fundraising expenses	488		488	1,820
Driving/Leonardos				1,000
Mosaic				675
PEOPLE RIOC				1,748
Licenses				
Just Giving subscriptions	216		216	216
Prison Library				83
Yoga	3,160		3,160	1,997
Transport Scheme	890		890	486
Drama Projects	3,976		3,976	4,350
Art support				486
Movember Trophy				
Sundries	364		364	264
<i>Sub total</i>	16,991		16,991	20,425
Total payments	16,991		16,991	20,425
<i>Net of receipts (payments)</i>	1,386		1,386	6,246
Cash funds last year end	34,303		34,303	40,549
Cash funds this year end	32,927		32,927	34,303

9. Public Benefit Statement

Our Public Benefit statement remains unchanged from previous reports.

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.

10. The Year Ahead

The annual charity strategy meeting for 2016/2017 was held in April 2016, led by an independent (volunteer) facilitator and attended by trustees, volunteers and prison staff. Recent changes in the Prison system were discussed with prison management, in particular their impact on HMP Erlestoke and the Charity. HMP Erlestoke was repurposed in January 2015 to a rehabilitation prison focusing on drug, alcohol and behaviour change programmes; the Friends of Erlestoke Prison now focuses on activities, which support offender

rehabilitation and building a rehabilitative culture within the Prison.

The Friends are pleased to report that the Visits Hall underwent a refurbishment programme in 2015 and the old metal tables and chairs were replaced with more comfortable furnishings. However, there is still scope for improvement in the overall visitor experience and the Friends will continue to work with the Prison and Barnardos to support this, particularly developing the Transport Scheme to meet the increasing demand from families.

The Prison became a non-smoking prison in May 2016 and the Friends will support the Health Trainer programme in the early part of the next year.

The Friends will concentrate their work during 2016/17 in the following areas:

- Support to prisoners' families and children
- Improving the overall visitor experience
- Rehabilitation and therapy through drama, art, music and yoga
- Education and skills development to improve employability on release
- Innovative rehabilitation techniques which inspire prisoners to change behaviours and transform their lives

10.1 Sustainability

The Friends of Erlestoke Prison is a member of CLINKS, www.clinks.org which supports voluntary organisations who work with offenders and their families. In the recent CLINKS report 'The State of the Sector', 2016, they highlighted the challenges facing organisations, which work in this sector. The Friends recognise that some of these are impacting the Charity now and need to be continually addressed in the coming years to ensure sustainability of the Charity. In particular:

- *'Clients' needs are becoming more severe'* – the population of HMP Erlestoke is changing because of the repurposing to rehabilitation. There are more volatile prisoners coming to Erlestoke for specific programmes, some of who have not been in prison before. The levels of violence are increasing and any type of rehabilitation is more of a challenge in such an environment. The Friends need to remain sensitive to these issues and focus on programmes, which support a rehabilitative culture.
- *'Partnership working is important but can be challenging'* - all of the services delivered by the Friends involve working with external partners. Good partnership working requires time and commitment and this can be a challenge with a small group of trustees and volunteers managing multiple programmes. Additionally, key to the success of the Friends is the ability of the Prison to absorb new activities into the regime and staff them appropriately. This has been a challenge in the last year with the reduced staffing levels in HMP Erlestoke. Working closely with internal partners is critical to the success of any new activity funded by the Friends.

- *'Volunteers are vital but retaining them is a challenge'* – recruitment, training and retention of volunteers are key activities of the Friends, particularly for the Transport Scheme. This will remain a key area of activity for the Charity.
- *'More time needed to generate income, which impacts service delivery and ability to focus on core purpose'* – again, with a small group of trustees and volunteers who are overseeing the programmes funded by the Charity as well as raising the funds, time is always in short supply. The Friends are attempting to recruit a new trustee to focus on fundraising, but with little success, so fund raising is shared amongst all of our trustees. There are many charitable and voluntary organisations in Wiltshire, all seeking funds and support for their valuable work with vulnerable people, so local fundraising is a significant challenge. The Friends must continue to explore previously untapped sources of funding to ensure that their important work continues. Effective evaluation of our current work is also critical to demonstrate the impact of our investments and to attract new funding streams.

The Friends will continue to address the above issues, working closely with the Prison and benchmarking the work of other prisons and charities/organisations working within the Prison estate to learn and develop new ideas for HMP Erlestoke.

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. With the appointment of Simon Petchey, now responsible for governance, the knowledge of all trustees in this area has greatly improved.

Angela Hughes attended CLINKS '200,000 Reasons to Care' conference in London in October 2015, which focused on voluntary sector work to support families of offenders. Belinda Southwell hosted Ben Jarman, the 'Valuing Volunteering' Project Manager from CLINKS and gave him a tour of HMP Erlestoke in December 2015, explaining the work of the Friends.

Each Trustee has responsibility for particular projects, which are either being funded or are under consideration. As a result of this, the Trustees learn more about the actual project, the day-to-day operation of the Prison, roles and responsibilities of prison staff and the challenges of implementing new activities within the Prison service. Prison management staff and members of the Independent Monitoring Board regularly join Trustee/volunteer meetings to keep the Friends up to date about HMP Erlestoke and the current challenges.

11. More information

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

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

The Trustees

Friends of Erlestoke Prison