



## **Friends of Erlestoke Prison**

### **Annual Report**

*1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017*

# Annual Report

Publication date: August 2017

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## 1. Chair's report

Welcome to our 2016/2017 and 5<sup>th</sup> annual report. We have been operational since 2011 and we have come a long way since those early days of fundraising and promoting the charity.

2016 was a year of huge political change, which inevitably always impacts the prison system. Theresa May became Prime Minister in July 2016 following the Brexit vote. Elizabeth Truss succeeded Michael Gove as Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor. In November 2016, the government issued a white paper which promised to tackle prison safety and reform in an attempt to reduce prison violence and self harm across the country; this included the commitment to recruit the much needed 2,500 extra front line staff. This was followed in February 2017 by the announcement that the National Offender Management Service will be replaced by a new organisation, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPSS) to roll out the government's reform programme.



Prison violence was heavily reported throughout the year across the estate; sadly HMP Erlestoke saw an increase in violence and experienced two serious incidents in June, which led to the closure of two accommodation wings until March 2017. For 9 months, the prison ran at less than operational capacity. SPICE continued to be a challenge across the prison service, despite the change in the law making it illegal to supply the drug. In May 2016, HMP Erlestoke successfully became a smoke free establishment. Staff shortages have continued to be an issue but this has improved for Prison Officer grades.

HMP Erlestoke remains a rehabilitation prison focused on education, vocational qualifications, drug, alcohol, violence reduction and behaviour change programmes. Similarly, the Friends have maintained their focus on rehabilitation, in particular the development of our visitor transport scheme, which is now an integral part of the visitor experience. We are proud to now have 26 drivers. We are also delighted to report that the portacabin outside the main gate is open on visit days for visitors to use whilst waiting for entry to the prison; we have campaigned tirelessly to make this happen!

Our yoga classes have continued to run this year and we have introduced Tai Chi classes on a weekly basis. We funded the verification and certification costs for 8 newly qualified Health Trainers who now work in the prison. We piloted the Concord Prison Trust 'Person to Person' course, which helps prisoners to develop their interpersonal skills and have agreed to support a further course in 2017. We also introduced a Friday morning art class, facilitated by a local artist; this was a prisoner's idea, which was suggested to us at one of our prisoner forums. We continue to meet regularly with prisoners and staff to ensure that the work we fund is relevant and supports the development of a rehabilitative culture.

We welcomed two new trustees this year: Sarah Gooch and Judith Squarey. Sarah is focusing on our major new project to raise funds for an all-weather pitch in the prison. Judith is working on ways to better support older prisoners. We also welcomed several new committee members who regularly join our meetings and help at fundraising events.

One of this year's highlights was the concert given by a prisoner band, which practices weekly with the Changing Tunes charity. The band members, who wanted to raise money for the Friends and Changing Tunes, proposed the idea for the concert. We welcomed over 50 members of the public to the Chapel, which not only raised money for the two charities but also raised awareness of life in prison for those who attended.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us or worked with us this year; our donors, volunteer drivers, patrons, committee members, prisoners, prison staff, partners, my fellow trustees and all those who came to our fundraising concerts. Without you, we would not be able to achieve all 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)      Simon Petchey (Governance)

Sarah Gooch (from June 2016)      Judith Squarey (from June 2016)

5. Patrons for the period of this report:

The Charity has a Royal Patron: HRH The Duchess of Cornwall

and 5 Patrons:

Sir Christopher Benson

John Bush, CVO, OBE

Robert Hiscox

The Lord Margadale of Islay

Sir John Nutting Bt., QC

## 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 dedicated to intervention programmes. The total operational capacity of the Prison is 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.

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 six trustees, a Royal Patron, five patrons, and a small committee of enthusiastic local volunteers. There are no paid permanent staff. The Charity has three independent service providers who deliver Yoga and Tai Chi, teach art classes and manage the Transport Scheme.



The six trustees are all volunteers; two have been with the Charity since start up and three were previously members of the Independent Monitoring Board, both at HMP Erlestoke and other establishments. 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.

Three trustees visited HMP and YOI Parc (Wales) in October 2016 to learn more about their award winning family interventions work and explore new ideas for potential investment by the Friends. HMP Parc provides a transport scheme to the prison for visitors, but use a local taxi company, whereas the Friends use volunteer drivers. They have many schemes for families, several of which are made possible because, unlike HMP Erlestoke, prisoners' families are local to the prison; for example, homework clubs for fathers and children. However, one specific area that the Friends will investigate further was the pages on the prison website dedicated to visitors: [http://www.hmpparc.co.uk/visiting\\_main.htm](http://www.hmpparc.co.uk/visiting_main.htm) HMP Erlestoke visitors could most certainly benefit from having such information available to them online and the Friends will strive to develop this in partnership with the management team

One of the trustees is currently studying BSc Crime and Criminology with the University of Portsmouth. 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](http://www.imb.org.uk)

We are pleased to welcome two new trustees who joined the Charity in June 2016: Sarah Gooch and Judith Squarey. Sarah was appointed to the Bench in Wiltshire in 1991 and during her time as a magistrate, worked closely with the probation service. Sarah has always been interested in promoting the care and rehabilitation of offenders and is also involved in the Wiltshire initiative, which monitors and encourages Restorative Justice in the community. Judith ran her own physiotherapy practice for 45 years and was married to an Anglican priest for 41 years. Her husband was involved with prisons and inevitably Judith became interested through his work. Judith has worked with several other charities including Riding for Disabled and has been involved in training sessions for the Clergy.

The trustees held a strategic planning meeting in April 2016, led by an independent, external facilitator. The previous year was reviewed and Steve Hodson, the Governor at that time, emphasised the priorities for the prison in 2016/17; expand and enhance programmes, provide more for families, improve the visitor experience and build a rehabilitative culture. The Friends agreed that their priorities should align with those of the prison and agreed to focus on families, particularly the growth of the transport scheme, the visitor experience and rehabilitative activities.

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. The Governor or Deputy Governor attends these meetings to provide up to date information about the prison. Volunteers are often invited to join these meetings, as are other prison staff and members of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB), who provide additional expertise on prison issues. Prisoners are also invited to the meetings on occasions to discuss how they have benefited from the work of the Friends. For example, the Health Trainers (see also Section 6.1) and participants of the Concord Prison Trust course (see also Section 6.4) made inspiring presentations to the trustees this year.

## 4.2 Prisoner forum

There has been one formal prisoner forum in this reporting period held in February 2017; seven prisoners from Education attended with Judith Squarey and Angela Hughes. Judith and Angela requested feedback to the Charity and ideas for new projects and initiatives. The Friends would like to expand the numbers of prisoners who join their forums to include a more diverse group of individuals who represent all the prison wings; we will work with the prison to achieve this in the coming year. Some of the ideas discussed in the February forum are listed below:

### Visitor Experience

The men agreed that the biggest problem with the visits process is that visitors often have to stand outside the prison gates waiting for entry, with no protection from inclement weather and no access to toilet facilities. The Friends have campaigned for many months to open up the portacabin by the gates for use by visitors.

*Editor's Note: The Friends are pleased to report that the portacabin was opened for use by visitors in April 2017.*

### Access to Computers

There was a lot of discussion about better access to computers and printers for both legal letter writing and for distance learning students. Ideally the distance learners would like computers in their cells, but acknowledged it is unlikely to be permitted for security reasons. The men also agreed that they are not up to date with regards to IT – it was suggested that the prison could adopt the 'Raspberry Pi' technology that some schools are currently using to teach children programming (<https://www.raspberrypi.org/help/videos/>)

*Editor's Note: The Friends have discussed this with the Head of Education and it is currently being investigated for potential classroom use.*

### Support to OU/distance learning students

There was general agreement that more research support is needed for Open University/distance learning students because of their limited access to the Internet.

*Editor's Note: The Friends subsequently discussed this with the Head of Education who agreed that prisoners studying distance learning courses would benefit from internet research support. Coincidentally around the same time, a local individual approached the Friends seeking a volunteering opportunity in the prison. The Head of Education and Angela Hughes met with the individual and agreed that she could undertake the role. At the time of this report's publication, the individual was going through the prison vetting process with a view to starting the role in September 2017.*

### **Older prisoners**

The older prisoners group would like some outside speakers to join their group on a monthly basis. They have had talks about health and what they should and should not be doing but would like speakers to come and discuss other areas of interest such as the Devizes Museum, the Army, a local history society, local employers, National Trust, Unlock and Keevil Airfield.

*Editor's Note: Judith Squarey is currently working with RECOOP (Resettlement and Care of Older Prisoners) to establish a schedule of external speakers for the older prisoners group.*

### **Health Trainers**

One of the men at the forum was a certified Health Trainer representative (he had also completed the Concord Prison Trust course); he asked about the possibility of the Friends providing Health Trainer equipment. They are in need of more scales, heart pressure monitors and a 'recumbent bike' for the Sports Hall (there is only one in the prison).

*Editor's Note: The Friends have asked the prison for a formal funding request.*

### **Concord Prison Trust – how to increase participation levels**

Judith and Angela asked the group for suggestions about increasing participation on programmes, such as the Concord Person to Person course. The men suggested that leaflets should be put in everyone's cell to raise awareness of the opportunities.

*Editor's Note: When the Concord Prison Trust 'Person to Person' participants (see also Section 6.4) subsequently presented at a Trustee meeting, they suggested that they could help to 'sell' the next course by presenting the benefits that they acquired by taking part. The Friends will work with the Concord Prison Trust to improve participant numbers for subsequent courses.*

## **4.3 Governance**

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

The Governance activity for this report period has been fairly low key with emphasis on providing information as a training aid and providing input to various projects. The latter, for our major projects, has stressed the need for a commercially ethical and professional approach where significant expenditure is likely to be incurred, particularly for the all weather pitch project.

The passing into UK law in May 2018 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will require all charities to tighten up considerably on their use and protection of personal information. The GDPR imposes an obligation for all organisations to actively secure data subjects' (eg donors) permission for us to hold their information, and for the purpose for which it will be used. Initial work has started to bring us from the old to the new standard.

## 5. Marketing and Publicity

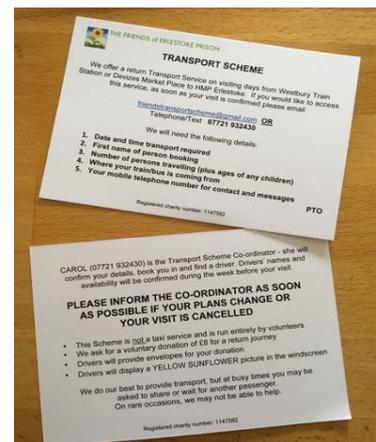
The Friends of Erlestoke Prison marketing leaflet was updated to reflect the new trustee appointments. The image showing the prisoner smoking a cigarette was also removed to represent HMP Erlestoke as a smoke free establishment. Leaflets were distributed at this year's fundraising events and are available in prison visiting areas. The website was regularly updated and supporters/potential supporters and partners are directed to it in all communications. The Friends aim to have more content relevant to visitors, particularly families and will continue to work with the prison to facilitate this.



The Friends now have a 85cm x 210cm tall advertising banner, which is used at all events (seen here in the Prison Chapel) to outline the main activities of the charity.

Articles about the Friends continue to be included in the prison internal magazine, previously known as 'Paper Soldier', now known as 'The Manor'. This is written and edited by prisoners, for prisoners.

The Transport Scheme continues to be promoted regularly in the magazine, plus in the Visits Hall, the Visitor Centre and in the residential wings.



A postcard was designed to promote the Transport Scheme; this is now given to all prisoners at Induction and is also available in the Visits Hall and Visitor Centre.

Advertisements for Transport Scheme volunteer drivers were placed in local church and community magazines (see Section 6.8).

### 5.1 Friends of Erlestoke Prison Resettlement and Rehabilitation Award

Congratulations to Carole Vincent who won the Friends' Rehabilitation and Resettlement staff award for encouraging a prisoner through an Open University degree over a number of years. Both Carole and her husband Clive were nominated for their work with the offender as he studied a degree in 'Earth Sciences and Environmental Development'. Carole's support was over and above her normal duties and was in the form of a mentoring role. The establishment became aware of this work as a result of a letter from the Prisoners' Education Trust stating, "It was great to read about how Clive and Carole Vincent had inspired and supported you throughout your studies and encouraged you to keep on progressing".

## 6. Projects

### 6.1 Health Trainers

The Wiltshire Council Health Trainer programme at HMP Erlestoke started in 2009. In May 2016, a new cohort of eight men was selected to become health trainers. They attended sessions delivered by Wiltshire Council Public Health staff and successfully completed the City and Guilds level 3 Health Trainer certificate. The Friends funded the verification and certification costs for the men. The Health Trainers now fulfill a role in the prison similar to Health Trainers around Wiltshire in the local community. They work on a confidential one to one basis with other prisoners, helping their clients to establish their own solutions to improve health and wellbeing. They focus on health issues such as healthy eating, stopping smoking, increased physical activity, weight loss and improving emotional health. The Friends believe this is a valuable programme, not only for the Health Trainers own development, but also for all their clients in the prison.

One of the 2016 Health Trainers said *“being a Health Trainer has helped me feel like I am doing something good to feel part of a good society. All my life I have caused pain and destruction to all people. Now I have qualifications, I can use the skills to the good and make up wasted time. I can help people so that they do not feel they have to cope alone any more”*. (extract from the Wiltshire Council Public Health ‘HMP Erlestoke, Health Trainer Service Review May 2016 – April 2017’).

Angela Hughes attends Health Trainer Steering Group meetings to monitor the progress of the programme and to assess the need for potential further support from the Friends.

For further information about the Health Trainer programme in Wiltshire, please visit: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-trainers>

### 6.2 Art Classes

There is significant evidence, which demonstrates that art can positively impact offender rehabilitation. The Friends are strong believers of this and are pleased to report the launch of the ‘Friday Art Project’ in early March 2017. A local artist and qualified counsellor, Sue McNally Mills, is now running classes in the Education Department on a weekly basis. Sue has been contracted for 6 months, after which the class attendance and participant feedback will be reviewed. The class is available for up to 8 men per session. They are not qualification based sessions but intended for those who wish to express themselves in a safe environment with guidance and inspiration from Sue. If feedback continues to be positive and the classes are well attended, the Friends will continue their investment for a further 6 months, and then review again.

For more information about the impact of art in prisons, please visit the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance Evidence Library <http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/evaluations/>

### 6.3 Panaboard legs



Following the purchase of an interactive whiteboard for the Psychology department last year, the Friends have since purchased legs for the board so that it could be wheeled from room to room. The board is used to support programmes such as Self Change and Healthy Relationships.

## 6.4 Concord Prison Trust 'Person to Person' Course

The Friends match funded a pilot 'Person to Person' course with the Concord Prison Trust, which ran in November/December 2016. Disappointingly only four offenders completed the course, despite the taster session in early November; it had been hoped that 8 men would join the pilot course. It was a 6-week course, which focused primarily on improving participants' communication skills. There were 2 sessions per week with some in-cell work and included writing two 500-word essays and keeping a weekly journal. Two of the four participants joined a Trustee meeting in February 2017 and shared how they had benefited from the course. Both said that their communication skills had improved and that it had changed their perceptions of themselves in terms of how they came across to others. They both felt that the skills they learned would be useful to them on release in terms of seeking work, attending interviews, working with others and developing personal relationships.

The course participants and Trustees agreed that the course needs to be better 'sold' to prisoners in the future with a much-improved explanation of the benefits of developing strong communication skills. The Trustees have agreed to match fund a course in 2017, but only if the course is better marketed and results in a full compliment of participants to ensure value for the money invested.

*The Concord Prison Trust was established as a registered charity in August 2004, but began their work in 1999 as a not-for-profit consultancy providing basic counseling skills courses for prisoners. They are dedicated not only to prison education but also to providing a path to rehabilitation through self-knowledge. Their courses teach prisoners a skill which could, with further training, lead to a career on release and also insight and self-awareness, making them question the path their lives have taken. For more information about the Concord Prison Trust, please visit: <http://www.concordprisontrust.org.uk>*

## 6.5 Bookpacks

The prison library creates packs, which offenders can hand out to young children during a visit or a Family Day. These contain a picture book, crayons and paper. These packs offer a focus for fathers and children during the visit and also provide a present for the child to take away after the visit. The cloth bags for these packs are made by the Textiles Class participants in Education, who create bags with appliqué pictures of, for example, trains and flowers, both of which are very popular. The Friends have supported this activity in the past and again funded the provision of cloth, thread and crayons to create new bags for the children.

## 6.6 Chapel Garden structure

There has been much discussion this financial year about building a rainproof structure in the Chapel garden for use by prisoners and staff when the weather is poor. The Trustees have approved the expenditure for this based on a design from the prisoners working in the Farms and Gardens carpentry workshop. The structure will be made by the prisoners and put in place during summer 2017.

## 6.7 Transport Scheme

After setting up the Transport Scheme in April 2014, the Friends have been able to provide transport to over 1650 passengers. The Scheme is now a permanent service. It has proved 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. There is no convenient bus service from Westbury Station to the Prison and Transport Scheme allows many visitors to make regular visits, particularly those who could not otherwise afford to pay for taxi journeys from Westbury or Devizes.

During the year April 2016 to March 2017 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').

Total passengers	545
Total children under 12	146
Total volunteer drives	469
Total 'no show'	13

*Figure 1: Statistics for April 2016 to March 2017*

Many visitors travel long distances and come from as far afield as Yorkshire, Manchester, the Midlands, London, Devon, Cornwall, Kent, Sussex, Wales and East Anglia. Such journeys, by public transport, make for a very long day, especially for young children. The consideration and thoughtfulness of the volunteer drivers is hugely valued. Passengers are asked 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.

Two meetings were held for the Driving Team during the year, in April and December. These gave the drivers the opportunity to meet and exchange information about the scheme. The December meeting was held in the Visits Hall at the prison and those attending were able to learn more about the experience of visitors to the prison. In February, one of the drivers very kindly hosted a luncheon at her home for the other drivers. Many came and it was a good opportunity for them to meet, exchange views and for the trustees to renew their appreciation for their work. The team of drivers has increased to 26 and the trustees wish to express their gratitude to those who give so generously of their time, when they have busy lives. The Transport Scheme could not operate without them.

Carol Part took up the post of Transport and Volunteer Co-ordinator in February 2016. She ensures the smooth running of the Scheme and acts as the liaison link between the passengers, the volunteer drivers and the trustees.

Throughout the year, we receive messages of thanks from passengers and here are just a few examples:-

- *"Thank you for all your help – such a lovely organisation – so grateful to have met you all."*
- *"Thank you for organizing the transport today, it is really appreciated. I have no idea how we would have found the prison without your volunteers"*
- *"My visits would not have been possible without all your kindness – thank you for everything you have done for me"*

## 6.8 Tai Chi (Qigong)

The Friends are pleased to report that Tai Chi classes commenced in the prison in early January 2017, taught by Jane Greenlees, from the Prison Phoenix Trust (who has been teaching yoga in the prison since late 2013). Word spread quickly about the classes, which have been running on Monday mornings in the Sports Hall with between six and thirteen participants. On the first week, several men joined the class expecting to use Tai Chi as a martial art even though it was promoted as Tai Chi for health. This group of men did not return in the second week. However, at the end of this reporting period, the class had settled with regular attendance from men who were there for health benefits.



The class focuses on Qigong, which is a practice within Tai Chi that is more practical for prisoners as it requires less space. Qigong can be practiced in-cell and is something the men can continue to learn for life in prison and on release. Jane reports that the men are visibly calmer after the classes. She also believes that Tai Chi is more accessible than yoga to some older prisoners (one student is 70 and agrees with her) and aims to encourage this group to join the class.

## 6.9 Yoga



The Friends have continued to invest in Yoga sessions this year. Classes for offenders have been running on Monday mornings in the Sports Hall with between six and thirteen participants and on Friday afternoons on the Silbury wing with between six and eight participants. Classes are one hour in length. Sadly, the class for staff had to be suspended in October 2016 because of insufficient numbers primarily due to resource pressures in the prison. Jane Greenlees has continued as our yoga teacher and is much appreciated by the Friends and the offenders who attend the classes. The trustees receive regular letters from the participants to emphasise the positive impact that it has on their lives in prison. Several offenders attend Yoga and Qigong; below are extracts from offender's letters of thanks for the classes:

*"Yoga is conducive to physical, mental and emotional well-being. We are lucky to have Jane as our leader. Yoga helps my back pain and helps maintain equanimity, essential in prison"*

*"For 2 – 3 days after (the classes) I feel the benefits and the calming effects. I will carry on, once I am released"*

*"I want to thank you for helping me gain a better peace of mind and a more positive attitude. There is not much to look forward to in jail, apart from coming to your classes. They help me cope with daily life in here and cope in times of trouble and stress"*

*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](http://www.theppt.org.uk)*

## 7. Fundraising

### 7.1 Prison Band Concert – September 2016



The Friends were approached by a group of four prisoners who practice weekly in a rock band in the prison Chapel; they wanted help in putting together a fundraising concert. The band, named 'The Discarded' works regularly with Changing Tunes, a well-established charity that uses music to aid prisoner and ex-prisoner rehabilitation. The

band wanted to fundraise for both charities and to split the proceeds. The Friends worked closely with staff, the band and Changing Tunes to facilitate the concert; we felt strongly that the men should be given the opportunity to perform and give something back to the charities that support them.

On a Sunday afternoon in September 2016, in front of an invited audience of just over 50 people, the band performed 2 sets including a mixture of well-known covers plus songs that they had written themselves. Audience feedback was tremendously positive; many had never been inside a prison before and were overwhelmed by the standard of musicianship that made the concert a success. £643 was raised and split between the Friends and Changing Tunes. More importantly, many people were exposed to a positive initiative in the prison estate, at a time when the media was reporting heavily about the challenges that prisons were facing. Several commented that the concert and the band members' attitude had provided a positive view of prisons and prisoner rehabilitation and had transformed their perceptions of prison life.

*Changing Tunes is a well-established charity that uses music teaching, rehearsing, recording, performance, improvisation and composition to aid the rehabilitation of prisoners and ex-prisoners. For more information about the charity, please visit: <http://www.changingtunes.org.uk>*

### 7.2 Christmas Concert – December 2016



In December 2016, the Friends organised their third Christmas Concert following the success of those held in 2012 and 2014. Thank you to everyone who joined us at St John's Church, Devizes. Over 150 people were welcomed to the church by Canon Paul Richardson, Belinda Southwell,

our Chair and Tim Knight, Governor, HMP Erlestoke. Everyone enjoyed a programme of performances from the Wessex Male Choir and Shrewton Silver Band raising over £3,200 through ticket sales and donations.

### 7.3 Easyfundraising

The Friends continue to encourage all supporters to donate via [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://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 2016/2017

The Friends would particularly like to thank the Inchcape Foundation and Robert Hiscox, who have made significant donations to the Charity in this reporting period.

## 8. Financial Review

This is our fifth Annual Report and we are in the sixth year of the charity's existence. The charity on 31st March 2017 had £24,784 in the bank. We spent £20,843 and raised £12,677. Our fundraising was steady this year with two good events. We have increased spending on a variety of projects and formalising the Transport Scheme with a dedicated coordinator has proved an effective move. Our budget for the financial year 2016/2017 has been set at £21,800 with the freedom to look at additional projects in year; and our fundraising efforts are being energised to match the increase in spending. We are building a fund internally for the all weather sports pitch project and treating donations specifically directed towards the sports pitch as restricted funds.

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 remains under review to ensure that, when market conditions allow, we obtain a slightly better rate of return on our current reserve.

## 8.1 Receipts and Payments Accounts: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
<b>Receipts</b>				
Fundraising income	5,865		5,865	11,424
Grants				
Donations Received	6,569		6,569	3,921
Gift Aid Income				
Investment income				15
Sales of Equipment				
Just Giving	243		243	260
<i>Sub total (gross income for AR)</i>	12,677		12,677	15,620
<b>Total Receipts</b>	12,677		12,677	
<b>Payments</b>				
Transport Coordinator and equipment	7,200		7,200	653
Transport Expenses	464		464	890
Yoga	4,962		4,962	3,160
Art				
Drama				3,976
Tai Chi				
Concord Prison Trust	1,945		1,945	
Health Trainers	2,800		2,800	
Equipment	414		414	2,335
Fish	18		18	
Art Materials	186		186	
Fundraising	1,798		1,798	488
Insurance	462		462	459
Justgiving subscription	216		216	216
Older project areas				4,451
Sundries	379		379	364
<i>Sub total</i>	20,843		20,843	16,992
<b>Total payments</b>	20,843		20,843	16,992
<i>Net of receipts (payments)</i>	8,166		8,166	6,246
<b>Cash funds last year end</b>	32,927		32,927	34,303
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	24,761		24,761	32,931

## 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

Support to prisoners' families and children remains a key objective for the charity and the Friends will continue to sustain and develop Transport Scheme to meet the increasing demand. We will also continue to offer art and yoga and hope to introduce some drama sessions back into the regime over the coming months. Consideration will be given to all future requests for funding which support education and skills development to improve post custody employability. Also initiatives, which support rehabilitation and inspire

changes in patterns of offending behaviour will be supported where possible.

In addition to these activities, the trustees have recently approved the start of their most ambitious fund raising project to date; an all-weather sports pitch within the grounds of the prison. There has been no facility for outside sport since the old football pitch was used to deposit the 'spoil' when the foundations were dug for Silbury Wing several years ago.

The Friends believe that a sports pitch will greatly benefit the mens' physical and mental well being and will provide educational opportunities as well as fresh air and exercise. They will be able to play team sports and we firmly believe that playing football, volleyball and other sports will help turn their lives around.

A local Wiltshire firm has been selected to construct the sports pitch, and work will start once we have raised sufficient money. The staff at HMP Erlestoke are very enthusiastic about this project, as they too will benefit from the facility.

This is a long-term project and we are currently developing a fundraising strategy to raise the required money for the pitch. The Bishop of Ramsbury is planning to bicycle from Canterbury to Rome later this year to raise money for the Friends and other fundraising activities are being planned. We will also apply to charitable trusts and other organisations which can help finance this exciting project.

*In the words of Oscar Wilde; "All Saints have a past, All Sinners have a future".*

## **10.1 Sustainability**

A challenge for any charity in what is now a highly competitive environment for securing funds, is the issue of sustainability. The Friends will continue to explore previously untapped sources of funding to ensure that their important work continues. Our fund raising has to become more strategic, particularly for the all-weather sports pitch.

Effective evaluation of our current work is also critical to demonstrate the impact of our investments and to attract new funding streams. We will continue to work with external partners to deliver the best services possible and ensure that that prison can absorb new activities into the regime with the required level of support. We will also continue to recruit new volunteers for the Transport Scheme and focus on activities, which ensure the retention of existing volunteers and trustees.

## **10.2 More information**

If you would like more information about the work of the Friends, please visit our website: [www.friendsoferlestokeprison.com](http://www.friendsoferlestokeprison.com) or email [info@friendsoferlestokeprison.com](mailto:info@friendsoferlestokeprison.com)

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

The Trustees

Friends of Erlestoke Prison