



THE FRIENDS of ERLESTOKE PRISON



The Friends of Erlestoke Prison Annual Report

*1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020
Published 3rd June 2020*

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With thanks to Annabel Gunter for the symbolic painting of the white horse with an open window, to illustrate the work of the Friends. The view of the white horse is imagined, as it is not visible from the prison.

1. Chair's report



Welcome to our 8th Annual Report, summarising a year which began with such optimism and ended in significant uncertainty with the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

In the early part of the year, HMP Erlestoke began a transition to become a rehabilitation and resettlement prison and introduced a new drug recovery wing. Despite budgets being tight, staffing levels have remained good with a corresponding positive impact on the regime, until March when coronavirus began to negatively impact the prison. In line with national directives, the prison ceased to run their normal regime to protect staff, prisoners and service providers. We therefore ceased our services just before financial year end.

However, until then, we had continued to provide programmes which are proven to support offender rehabilitation but are beyond the scope of prison budgets. Our Art sessions ran 5 times per month up until Christmas when Sue McNally-Mills moved to undertake a new venture and we wished her well. Our thanks go to Sue for three years of Art classes which, from participants' feedback, have had significant impact on their wellbeing. We started to recruit a replacement, but this is currently on hold due to coronavirus. Origami continued every Friday, with substantial income being made from origami card sales. Thank you to Helen Holtam for her teaching and enthusiasm in selling the work of the class participants. Yoga classes continued on Wednesdays under the skillful teaching of Susanna Graziano, again participant feedback is highly positive; thank you Susanna. Beth Fiducia-Brookes led Friday drama workshops and ran a successful activity at the last Family Day; thank you also to Beth. Finally, Sally-Anne Livesley continued to lead our Transport Scheme and supported our volunteer drivers. Thank you to Sally-Anne and all of our drivers; I know that families and prisoners appreciate all that you do.

We are grateful to the Hilden Charitable Fund who continued to fund our Transport Scheme for a further 12 months (reported in 2018/19 accounts). Locally we are appreciative of Marlborough College who shared their Christmas Carol Service collections with us and to the Devizes Lions Club for choosing to support us this year. Thank you also to those of you who supported our Bridge event, our cARTes Postales joint event with Salisbury Museum and our Christmas Auction. And thank you to everyone who has donated to the Friends this year; your support has allowed us to allocate significant funds to our ambitious All-Weather Sports Pitch project and sustain our core programmes in the prison.

I would like to thank Judith Squarey and Carol Part for their commitment and dedication to our charity and who, after several years of working with us, have retired from their trustee roles. I would like to welcome Primrose Campbell, Francesca Bishop and Eve McBride who have joined us as new trustees. Thank you also to the current trustees for their continued work ensuring the smooth running and sustainability of the Friends, especially Sarah Gooch for her tenacious fundraising work, particularly to support the All-Weather Sports Pitch project.

We approach this coming year with some trepidation. On the 23rd March 2020, we wrote to our service providers to temporarily suspend their contracts; everything is currently on hold until it is safe to start up again. We anticipate that fundraising may become more challenging. However, we will not be discouraged, and we will start our services once more when it is safe to do so.

Finally thank you to our patrons who continue to encourage the Friends and to the prisoners and staff in HMP Erlestoke who support and benefit from our work. I look forward to the next year and acknowledge that we must adapt to the changing and extraordinary circumstances in which we all find ourselves, to ensure that the charity can continue provision of services to the men in HMP Erlestoke and their families.

Angela Hughes, 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:

Angela Hughes	Chair
Mark Mangham	Treasurer
Simon Petchey	Governance
Carolyn Deverall	Secretary
Sarah Gooch	All-weather Sports Pitch fundraising
Belinda Southwell	Yoga and Drama programmes
Judith Squarey	Older prisoners (until October 2019)
Carol Part	Fundraising and Transport Scheme (until November 2019)
Primrose Campbell	Art programme (from March 2020)
Eve McBride	Transport Scheme (from January 2020)
Francesca Bishop	Contract management and Origami programme (from January 2020)

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, DL	John Bush, CVO, OBE
Robert Hiscox, DL	The Lord Margadale of Islay, DL
Sir John Nutting Bt., QC	

3. Objectives of the Friends of Erlestoke Prison

HMP Erlestoke is a Category C adult male predominantly rehabilitation prison and is the only prison in Wiltshire. Located in the rural village of Erlestoke, the nearest railway station is Westbury, 8 miles away. There are eight residential units with predominantly single cells with in-cell sanitation. There are three standard units, one of which is used for induction, four are enhanced units, one is dedicated to programmes which address substance abuse issues and past behaviours. The prison is intervention-focused and whilst it will accept all Category C prisoners, they will primarily be serving sentences of 4 years or more. The total operational capacity of the Prison is 524.

For further information about the prison, please visit: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/contacts/prison-finder/erlestoke>

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'.

The Friends of Erlestoke Prison helps to support prisoners with the challenges of rehabilitation 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 currently has nine trustees, a Royal Patron, five patrons, and a group of enthusiastic local volunteers, supported by the Governor and the prison management team. There are no paid permanent staff. The Charity has five independent service providers who deliver yoga and drama sessions, teach art and origami classes and coordinate the Transport Scheme.

The trustees are all volunteers; two have been with the Charity since start up and were previously members of the Independent Monitoring Board, both at HMP Erlestoke and one other establishment. New trustee recruitment is often achieved through existing trustees' personal networks of interested individuals. Two trustees stepped down in this reporting period; Judith Squarey and Carol Part. Three trustees joined; Primrose Campbell, Eve McBride and Francesca Bishop. All trustees are risk assessed and vetted by the Prison security department. Trustees' backgrounds are diverse and include experience in the NHS, the Army, Police, Technical Sales, Education, Human Resources, Marketing, Restorative Justice, Criminology, Magistracy, Commissioning, Event Management and Law.

Trustees attend relevant conferences and seminars to ensure their knowledge is current and relevant to the work that they perform for the Charity. For example: Angela Hughes and Sarah Gooch attended the 'Developing a Fundraising Strategy' event held by the Small Charities Coalition. Primrose Campbell attended the Clinks 'Working and Volunteering in Prisons' workshop. Angela Hughes also attended Wiltshire Community Foundation's 'Annual Funding Conference 2019 – Building Connections'.

The trustees held regular meetings (approximately every 6 weeks) throughout the year 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 plus a member of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) attend these meetings to provide up to date information about the prison. Prison staff sometimes join the meetings to provide additional expertise on prison issues. Prisoners are also invited on occasions to discuss how they have benefited from the work of the Friends.

4.2 Governance

No particular governance issues have arisen in 2019/2020, and it has been generally 'business as usual' in ensuring conformance to data protection legislation and proper insurance against risk. Two additional areas of focus have stood out during the past 12 months. Firstly, the Friend's constitution has been revised to reflect changes in trustee membership, and to update it as various stipulated time intervals have been completed.

Secondly, new trustees have been introduced to the charity's data protection procedures, and these have been emphasised to existing trustees. It has also been stressed that the EU General Data Protection Rules, which constituted part of the UK's regulations prior to Brexit, has continued unchanged since Brexit.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Trustee Board has spent time considering the safeguarding issues involved in transporting large families via the Transport Scheme. The issue here is that circumstances could arise where our drivers might be asked to carry unaccompanied children in their cars (even as part of a convoy from the station). The trustees have determined that, regrettably, for safeguarding purpose, such requests must be refused.

5. Local community – examples of raising awareness

Prisons are often represented negatively in the media. Some of the Friend's work aims to educate the local community about the positive contributions that prisons make to society.

For example, Marlborough College invited Angela Hughes to speak to over 400 pupils in May 2019 about the England and Wales prison system and specifically how the work of the Friends supports HMP Erlestoke. Subsequently the College kindly chose the Friends as one of the four recipients of their Christmas Carol Services' collections; Angela was presented with a cheque from the College for £1,686 in January 2020.

 Marlborough College @MarlboroughCol · May 19, 2019
Thank you to Angela Hughes who spoke to over 400 pupils this morning about the work of Friends of Erlestoke Prison, and about the wider prison system. @friendserlepris



Pictured above are (left to right) Angela Hughes (Friends of Erlestoke Prison), and Kate Aspbury (Senior Prefect), Nick Maurice (Thriving Through Venture), Reverend Tim Novis (Senior Chaplain), Christian Freeman (Senior Prefect) and Virginia Reekie (The Kempson Rosedale Trust).

Angela also gave an after-dinner talk to the Rotary Club of Westbury in October 2019, highlighting the programmes in the prison supported by the Friends. Mark Mangham attended the Lions Club evening in June 2019 and received a cheque for £250 on behalf of the Friends.

6. Prison Community

6.1 Friends of Erlestoke Prison Public Safety Award – September 2019

Simon Petchey attended the HMP Erlestoke Community Awards Ceremony to present the Public Safety Award, sponsored by the Friends. The award recognises work of prison staff relating to public protection. Our congratulations go to Carolyn Lauder who won our award this year. Carolyn is an experienced Probation Officer currently working in the Offender Management Unit. She has a complex case load, often working with

prisoners who exhibit difficult and aggressive behaviour. Carolyn is highly skilled at risk management and working with many outside agencies; she balances the need to manage risk with the needs of the prisoner and his willingness to progress through his sentence.

Also nominated for this award were Emma Mercieca for her work with high risk offenders in the Offender Management Unit and Jade Richardson for her work in developing therapeutic relationships with prisoners.

The Friends would like to congratulate all the award winners, but in particular Dave Duxberry who retired at the end of last year and won the Lifetime Achievement Award. Dave worked for the prison service for over 28 years, largely at Erlestoke. Since the formation of the Friends in 2011, he has been a consistent supporter of the charity, helping to both initiate and expedite various projects in the prison for the charity. We wish him well in his retirement.

6.2 Chief Executive of HMPPS – Jo Farrar visit to HMP Erlestoke

In April 2019, the new Chief Executive of HMP Prison and Probation Service, Jo Farrar chose HMP Erlestoke as the first prison to visit in her new role. As part of her visit, Angela Hughes introduced her to the work of the Friends of which she was very supportive.



6.3 HMP Erlestoke Prison Council

The Friends were invited to join the October 2019 Prison Council meeting. The Council is run by prisoners and gives them an opportunity to present their viewpoints and suggestions for improvements in the prison. Eve McBride and Angela Hughes joined the meeting to provide an overview of the work of the Friends, listen to prisoners' ideas for what we might support in the future and discuss challenges faced by the charity in raising funds. It was suggested that the Friends could offer scholarships to those prisoners who want to study for Distance Learning degrees; Angela and Eve explained that the charity's policy is to fund only initiatives which benefit multiple prisoners. Other suggestions included the addition of open mic activities into drama workshops and discussions of how the Sports Pitch could be used upon completion. The Council also suggested that prisoners could raise funds for the charity.

7. Projects

7.1 Art Therapy

The Friends continued to run the weekly, well established 'Friday Art Project' and monthly 'Tuesday Art Project'. This activity ran successfully up until December 2019; we were sorry to lose Sue McNally-Mills who had been leading these sessions for the last three years and we wish her well in her new endeavours. We have identified a new service provider but have been unable to issue a contract in this financial year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The sessions were non-qualification based and continued to be popular with the 10 to 12 men who attended regularly. At several points in the year, Sue had to turn men away because there is insufficient space in the art room to accommodate more attendees. The Friends have investigated alternative locations for the sessions, but there is currently no other large safe space available in the prison for this type of session.



The sessions allowed the men to relax, be themselves, feel safe and find a skill they did not know they had. They also found inner calm during these sessions through the non-judgmental and supportive atmosphere that pervades through the art room. Sue encouraged the men but did not press them, allowing them to express themselves creatively as they wish. She also provided an avenue for them

to discuss any concerns or issues that may be worrying them. The group was open to anyone and while there is a small core who regularly attended, there have been prisoners who came as and when they felt the need for a calming environment.

The prison reported that prisoners who have been completely tense, quiet and introverted, relax and engage in conversation during the art sessions which has led to some of them to consider Education as an avenue for their own development. Others have demonstrated behaviour changes, such as those who gained self-esteem and confidence through their work and reduced their anxiety levels.

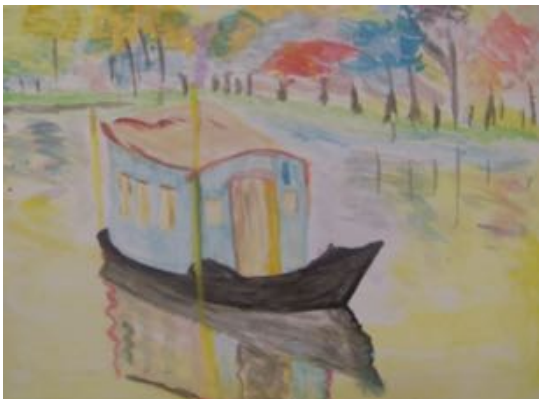
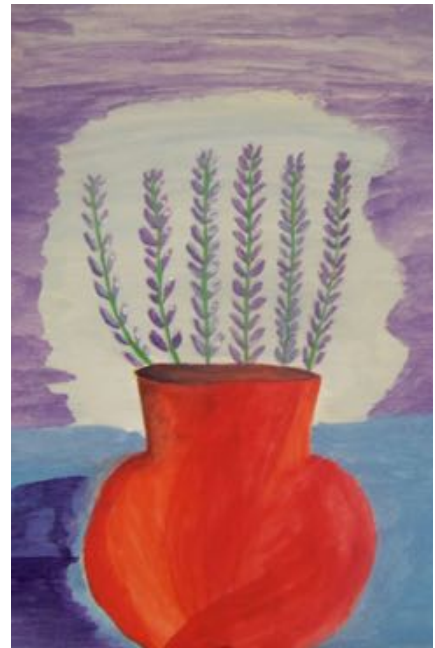
The men produced some excellent pieces of artwork and had an opportunity to lose themselves in creating artwork and forgetting everything else whilst in the session, which has had an extraordinary impact. Elizabeth Williams (Learning and Skills Manager) believes this to be a valuable opportunity within the prison; the prisoners really look forward to the sessions and they would be much missed if they did not continue.



Sue and Elizabeth joined the October Trustee meeting with two men who attend the Art sessions. The two prisoners emphasised that the sessions provide opportunities for them to be creative but also offer a safe space where they can support each other. The environment of the class makes them feel like they are not in prison and this is an opportunity that they have not had in other establishments. The men also praised Sue's teaching and thanked the trustees for funding the sessions. Below are some of the testimonials from men who have attended the art sessions:

'I feel safe in this class and able to talk to people about anything that is worrying me'

'I enjoy the creative freedom and the tutor challenging me to try different things'



'I appreciate we can now have our own pictures put up in the visits hall so my family can see what I have done'

'Sue is so kind and caring, she really understands and has helped me'

'It is great to be able to forget for a couple of hours where I am and focus on my art'

'It is such a calm and welcoming place - an oasis to retreat to'

'I can really relax and be myself in this class - there is no pressure only encouragement and support'

'It has been exciting having our art displayed in the outside community and to receive such lovely comments back - it is inspiring'

The Friends remain strong believers that art can positively impact rehabilitation and plan to continue running these sessions as soon as government coronavirus advice allows us to do so.



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/>

7.2 Arts Festival – Penned Up

For the last three years, the Friends have supported the 'Penned Up' arts festival in HMP Erlestoke. Prisoners are involved in the festival organisation including nominating and inviting the speakers to the event, designing publicity materials and helping with logistics. The event gives prisoners a window into other people's lives and an opportunity to think critically about their own. One in three prisoners attended at least one festival event last year. The Friends have once again agreed to support Penned Up in 2020 which, subject to Coronavirus restrictions, is planned to run later in the year with events spread over a longer period. David Kendall (Penned Up organiser) has also successfully secured Arts Council funding for the 2020 event. For more information about Penned Up, please view the TEDx talk that David Kendall gave in Salisbury in February 2020: https://www.ted.com/talks/david_kendall_crazy_but_brilliant_crazy

7.3 Bookbags

The Friends once again supported the prison library this year in the provision of cloth and thread to make the Book Bags that offenders give to their young children during visits. Additionally, Carol Part kindly donated two rolls of material for the bags. The children are allowed access to the bags and books during the visit and it gives the prisoner something to do with their child; reading and drawing



with the crayons. The Textiles class makes the bags, under the supervision of the Textiles teacher; this results in various designs to suit babies, boys and girls. The bags are made as and when they are needed. About 60 are handed out by prisoners each year.

7.4 Drama Workshops

Since summer 2018, Beth Fiducia-Brookes tutored termly drama workshops for the Friends. Last year, we reported that encouraging the men to join the workshops had been challenging. To address this, Beth rebranded the workshops as 'Interviewing and Communications Skills Development' covering for example, body language, tone of voice, eye contact, typical interview questions and interview role play. The men also explored what makes a good CV and drafted one of their own. Although attendance was again low, Beth mostly worked with a group of four men. The workshops were particularly affected by visits, health appointments and transfers to other prisons. However, Beth persevered and at the end of the 10 workshops, Angela Hughes and Primrose Campbell joined the last session to run mock interviews with the participants. The men were then able to put into practice what they had learnt in the workshops. Although the group was small, it enabled the men to discuss issues, share opinions and learn new things in a non-pressured environment.

In the Autumn term, Beth revised the workshops once more and although numbers remained small, up to seven men joined on some occasions. The men explored storytelling, comedy, scene writing, monologues and duologies and the 'Seven Basic Plots' with conversations, insights and reflections. A highlight of this term was a visit from playwright Mark Hewitt, who shared his current work 'Prison Dialogues' with the group. The men gave Mark feedback including what could happen next in his play. However, Beth was again challenged this term by job changes and other appointments which impacted the group numbers. The Prison Council suggested that the men were put off by the name 'Drama Workshops' and suggested calling the sessions 'Open Mic'. However, feedback from those who did attend was positive:

'I'm enjoying drama, being creative and acting out'

'First time being creative in ages'

'I can use some of the skills I've learnt here'

'Do this course!'

'It was more enjoyable than I thought'

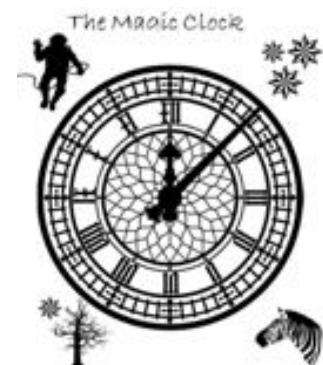
'There's worse things to do on a Friday morning'

To again address the low attendance figures, so that more prisoners could benefit from the Friends investment in drama, Beth put together a different format for the Spring term. It involved prisoners and their families and



was based on a tried and tested project that Beth had run in February 2019. Beth worked with 14 men to create a short play (The Magic Clock) which was performed as part of the prison Family Day in February 2020. Beth was supported by Valentina Rosati, an MA Applied Theatre placement student from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. The project ran for 8 days, with the performance on the last day. The men created the story line, designed and made the props and made star-shaped gift boxes for their children.

42 family members (including 26 children), prison and PACT* staff plus Belinda Southwell and Sarah Gooch from the Friends were in the audience. Most of the men had limited experience of drama and were outside of their comfort zone. However, they were keen to engage in the project as a way of building relationships with their children, which can also have a positive impact on reducing recidivism. As a result of the experience, the men reported that they had developed skills in communication, creativity, performing, positive relations with peers, problem solving, public speaking, reliability, self-belief, teamwork and well-being, as well as improving their personal confidence levels. They also commented that they had enjoyed spending extra time with their children and performing the play. The men were surprised by their individual achievements and the results of the teamwork. Other comments included:



'I'll miss this'

'The project as a whole was great'

'It's great – Beth was great and very professional'

'Thank you so much, we need it and we are so glad that you are doing this and all the hard work here for us'

HMP Erlestoke Activities Manager commented: *'the performance was a success and after that they really appreciated what they had achieved'*

Despite the popularity of the Family Day drama project, Beth and the Friends were concerned about the continued low attendance at the Friday drama workshops. Following a meeting with John Garman, Head of Reducing Reoffending, Beth, Belinda Southwell and Angela Hughes in November 2019, it was agreed that the drama workshops have the potential to support the rehabilitation of the men on the new drug free wing. Beth subsequently drafted a proposal to use drama as a creative outlet to explore the issue of psychoactive substance misuse through theatre. The proposal was approved by the Friends and accepted by the prison with an agreed start date of the 17th April 2020. However, at the time of writing, due to coronavirus, these workshops had not yet started.

The Friends continue to believe that drama can have a positive impact on prisoners' well-being and potentially longer-term rehabilitation; we remain committed to the drama workshops in 2020/21 and will start them up again as soon as it is safe to do so.

**PACT – Prison Advice and Care Trust is a national charity that provides support to prisoners, people with convictions, and their families. For more information about their work in HMP Erlestoke, please visit*

<https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/hmp-erlestoke>

7.5 Origami

Origami classes have had another successful year. Helen Holtam has continued to provide Friday morning origami; this will be her fourth year of running these sessions in the prison. Additionally, Helen's sale of cards on behalf of the Friends this year has reached approximately £7,500, a resounding achievement, particularly when added to the total for previous years which is now in excess of £20,000.



Helen has shared the cards at various exhibitions and events and has given talks about her personal experiences in the prison. This has provided not only good publicity for the Friends but has also helped to raise funds for materials needed for the classes. However, it is the pleasure and focus that the classes provide the prisoners which should also be acknowledged. Helen provides a weekly two-hour class for seven to eight regular attendees with other men occasionally dropping in to contribute. In the first hour

they stick and package cards and in the second session they learn to file a model to keep. The men share three positive things from their week, so the session also becomes a time to reflect. Most men arrive with their homework and often share their own skills with each other. The book folding shown in the picture (left) was

taught by one man to the others and more hard back books are being provided to encourage this activity. Here are just a few notable origami moments from the past year:

- In Spring 2019 the cards were entered for the Koestler Art Awards* and gained a silver award. Congratulations to the recipients!
- In early December white golden venture origami sculptured stars were prepared by the men to decorate a tree which entered the St Thomas Church Christmas Tree Festival. The decorated tree was then driven to Erlestoke for the prisoners to enjoy for Christmas.
- New outlets have been found from which to sell the cards including Shepherds Fine Arts in London, Salisbury Arts Centre, Gallery36 in Salisbury and The White Horse Bookshop in Marlborough. The cards are already sold in the prison Education Department, the Visits Hall and the Farm Shop. Outside the prison they are also sold in the Salisbury Cathedral Shop, the Fisherton Mill gallery, the Crown Court Gallery, Salisbury and the Devizes Bookshop.
- Private orders of the cards also continue to raise funds. Prisoners have made cards for weddings and supplied birthday and Christmas cards for two years to James Langstaff, the Bishop of Rochester, who has responsibility for prisons.
- The Origami class was featured in the internal prison magazine, 'The Manor', promoting their achievements and encouraging new participants to try out the sessions.
- During the recent lockdown due to Coronavius prisoners were each given two cards to write to their families and friends, together with an origami activity for those interested to complete.



The men contribute to designing the cards and origami structures and sharing expertise within the group. It provides calm focus as the words of one prisoner testify: *'Origami provides an escape where I can relax and yet can still be focused whether in the class or substituting waste time in front of the TV back in my cell. It's not every week that you can look back and see the benefits of your time, with origami you can as it is in front of you. As a bonus money is raised to help other prisoners. Win, win, win'*.

As there is a surplus of cards Helen is now keen to set up an online shop or gain sales via the charity website to assist in the fundraising. The trustees are currently exploring these options; at a time when direct sales are halted, this may prove to be invaluable.

The trustees continue to be grateful to Helen for her tireless efforts to support the men and the charity.



** The Koestler Awards seek to harness the uniquely transformative power of the arts to motivate prisoners, secure hospital patients and immigration detainees to learn the skills and gain the confidence to live creative, positive and productive lives. For more information, visit:*

<https://www.koestlerarts.org.uk>

7.6 Transport Scheme



Our Transport Scheme, first set up in 2014, goes from strength to strength. By facilitating regular contact between prisoners and their families, it lies at the heart of the aims of our charity. We know that prisoners maintaining strong links with family and friends is key to successful rehabilitation and our scheme aims to contribute to this. Here are a few comments from visitors:

'I would like to give my thanks to everyone from the Friends of Erlestoke that has supported me over the past 2 years and for giving up their time. Please pass on my thanks. Less than 2 months until my chap will be home so its happy times for me.... It is very important to me that the drivers know how much I've appreciated them all. Best wishes ...'

'Please thank all friends for their goodwill and kindness, through our darkest hours, you showed kindness and not a judgmental attitude to us. Keep on doing your valuable work. It is very important to the families you help. Kindest regards and God's Blessing.'

'My partner has now got a transfer closer to us. Please thank every driver for their personal time to take me and my children to see our loved one. The charity is invaluable to us and every other prisoners' family. Please keep doing what you are doing and one day if my family is fortunate enough to help in anyway, this charity will be one of our firsts to help. Thank you so much for the last 2 years.'

'Thank you for all your support because without you and all your volunteers lots of people wouldn't be able to visit their loved ones, am very grateful xx'

We also know that the prison also values highly the service we provide. Here is an extract from a letter from the Governor of HMP Erlestoke, Tim Knight:

'As the Governor of HMP/YOI Erlestoke, I would like to commend to you the Friends of Erlestoke Transport Scheme. They are a very dedicated group of volunteers and do a tremendous job in facilitating access to and from visits sessions at the prison. In many cases the Transport Scheme has made a huge difference to the ability of offenders to maintain effective contact with their loved ones via the visits process. We are entirely reliant on Friends of Erlestoke and this tight knit group of volunteers to maintain this vital scheme. We are enormously grateful for their efforts and I hope that they will be able to maintain this in the future. '

Our volunteer drivers collect visitors from the nearby bus and train stations and drive them to the prison and back. In so doing the scheme supports visits for friends and families of prisoners in both a practical and financial way; without the scheme, visitors would have to pay for a taxi to take them to the prison for the last part of their journey and would not benefit from the familiar friendly face of their driver. Visits are thus not only made easier but the prospect of them is less daunting for people who may have travelled a long distance and who may therefore be encouraged to visit more frequently.

Ever increasing numbers of journeys have been completed this last year demonstrating the success of advertising the service more widely through the prison with a postcard scheme. A growing army of volunteer drivers, up by 10, has come forward from the local community. This contributes to another aim of the charity; to raise awareness in the community of the prison's work in rehabilitation.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Total individual visitor lifts given	623	1072	1410
Total children under 12	111	146	338
Total volunteer journeys	515	881	611

Figure 1: Statistics for April 2019 to March 2020 compared with the two previous years

It is encouraging that 1410 lifts for adults and 338 for children were given by our drivers. Interestingly the numbers of journeys our volunteers have made has fallen despite increasing numbers of visitors receiving lifts. This is entirely due to the efficiency of our Transport Scheme Co-ordinator, Sally-Anne Livesley who combines lifts which not only saves journeys, but also gives an opportunity for visitors to travel together and share in one another's company. Sally-Anne expresses how supportive the drivers are, doing more than giving lifts. She says, *"They provide support to all the visitors, who are often not only new to the scheme but to the prison. Many of the visitors travel great distances, with many train changes for the 2-hour visit, for example: Liverpool, Manchester, Cornwall and Southampton are just a few of their journey start points. The gratitude and appreciation from the visitors are unending and I regularly get messages of thanks for all the work that we do."*

Drivers also support the Scheme in other ways. We have had two child seats donated to the Scheme this year and one driver very kindly fixed the leaking child seat storage shed for us. To show our appreciation for their dedication to the Scheme, we held a meeting with lunch in April 2019 to update them on other work of the

Friends, to share information, discuss their experiences of driving the visitors and to celebrate the success of the Scheme.

We have been fortunate in the last two years to receive an annual grant of £6,000 from the Hilden Charitable Trust towards the cost of our Co-ordinator and other expenses of the scheme, for which we are very grateful.

March this year brought the extraordinary global challenge of Coronavirus and it was with heavy hearts that our Transport Scheme has had to be put on ice. This coincided with prison visits ceasing entirely at the time the UK entered “Lockdown” on 23rd March 2020. We can only hope for an early end to the current distancing measures to enable the service to resume. The necessary suspension has brought into clear focus the vital importance of prison visits to both the prisoners and their families and friends. Our drivers were very disappointed that visits were in jeopardy. Here is a comment from a driver immediately prior to the “Lockdown”:
‘I’m doing one journey this weekend. Would be happy to continue to give one person one lift each week as long as that is required. Yes, I’m old but have no underlying health issues and It’s important to me to be of some use to others for as long as I can.’

**For more information about our Transport Scheme, please contact Sally-Anne: phone: 07721 932430
email: friendstransportscheme@gmail.com**

7.7 Yoga



Our yoga teacher, Susanna Graziano, is now in her 3rd year of teaching yoga to prisoners at HMP Erlestoke. In August 2019, the Yoga Coordinator for the Prison Phoenix Trust*, visited HMP Erlestoke to observe Susanna teach a class of twenty-two men and as a result, Susanna is now a fully qualified and accredited prison yoga teacher for which she is to be congratulated. A number of prisoners told the Coordinator how beneficial they found her classes; the Coordinator revealed to the Trustees that HMP Erlestoke is lucky to have such a great prison yoga teacher.

The weekly Wednesday class enables Susanna’s students to feel happier and more relaxed and she has had much positive feedback from them. Her class always starts with the men lying full stretch on their mats and calmly deep breathing, before they begin doing yoga postures. Often there can be a large number of men in her classes, but she maintains complete control over them.



Earlier in the year, Susanna ran a Friday course in addition to the Wednesday one. However, partly due to staffing issues, the men found it difficult to reach the Sports Hall where the classes take place on a Friday, these classes were stopped. There were also a number of conflicting events which impacted attendance. A monthly course run specifically for Prison Staff was also stopped, again resulting from conflicting events.

However, just prior to the start of coronavirus, Susanna has started to add Yoga to a 12-week certified “Personal Development Programme” which targets men with specific health problems. The

course is delivered by a teacher from Education and a member of the Physical Education team alongside Susanna. Susanna has delivered two sessions so far and feels that the addition of the ancient art of Yoga is of real benefit to the men who attend the Programme. It is anticipated that there will be further programmes in the future. Finally, here are some remarks made in a letter that Susanna received from a yoga participant:

'Yoga shows that we can surprise ourselves and can accomplish more'

'We enjoy every session and look forward to the next'

And the view of the HMP Erlestoke Activities Manager:

"The Yoga classes provide an opportunity for prisoners to focus on themselves as individuals and separate themselves for a short time from their prisoner identity. The class is calming and focused and teaches great techniques to help cope with adversity and stress. Susanna is a great teacher and really engages the men in the class. It attracts a broad range of ages and personalities and all the men follow the instructions and breath and stretch and focus together. They leave refreshed, although the class demands a significant physical effort at times, and in the knowledge that they are doing something positive and beneficial. The classes are a great success and I would like to thank the Friends for their support in providing such a valuable learning experience for the men at HMP Erlestoke."

Yoga is proven to "improve behavioral control and decrease psychological distress in a prison population" (Bilderbeck et al, 2012); the trustees remain committed to the continuation of yoga provision in HMP Erlestoke to improve prisoner well-being.

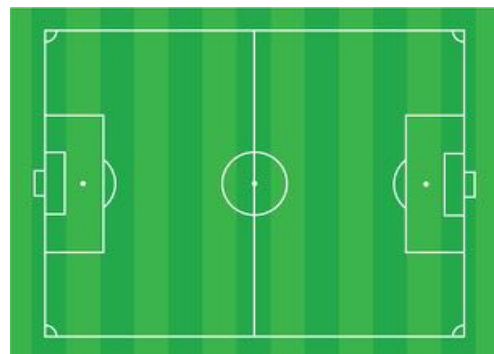
Bilderbeck, A.C., Brazil, I. A., Jakobowitz, S., & Wikholm, C. (2012). Participation in a 10-week course of yoga improves behavioural control and decreases psychological distress in a prison population. *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 47 1438-1445 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2013.06.014>

**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 participate 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*

8. All-Weather Sports Pitch

"Every saint has a past; every sinner has a future." Oscar Wilde

Three years ago, led by Sarah Gooch, the Friends launched an appeal, for funds to build an all-weather sports pitch, equipment and storage, on unused land at HMP Erlestoke. The trustees remain committed to helping the prison to achieve this; there is currently no outdoor space where prisoners can exercise or participate in sporting activities. Successful completion of the pitch would:



- Improve prisoners' health and well-being
- Improve prisoners' team working and communication skills
- Build prisoners' confidence in meeting people outside of the prison through sporting activities with the local community such as football, volleyball, circuit training and tennis
- Provide opportunities to strengthen relationships between prisoners and their children on family days.
- Enable the prison to offer sport/lifestyle qualifications to help prisoners obtain employment on release.

There is a universal awareness of the benefits of sport, teamwork, fresh air and exercise. Professor Rosie Meek's August 2018 report, "A Sporting Chance - an independent review of sport in prisons"* which was commissioned by the government, recognised that sport can directly contribute to efforts to reduce reoffending, particularly by providing a route into education and employment.

The IMB (Independent Monitoring Board) and the Governor, Tim Knight, have written letters of endorsement which we are using to support applications for funding from charitable trusts and other organisations. The prison Physical Education Instructors, the Regional Estates Manager and other members of staff are also enthusiastic and will be involved in all stages of planning for the pitch as we draw closer to having sufficient funds for the project to go ahead.

Sarah Gooch met with Danny Kruger, the new MP for Devizes, in February; he is interested in the work of the Friends and has written to Lucy Frazer, The Minister of State for Prisons and Probation on our behalf. Danny spent an afternoon in HMP Erlestoke and wrote in his weekly newsletter to constituents: *"The brilliant Friends of Erlestoke Prison are fundraising for an all-weather sports pitch for prisoners, which I strongly support; fitness and teamwork skills are not luxuries but necessities for life, and sport has been proven to reduce violence in prison and re-offending on release."*

We have had a busy and successful year fundraising and gaining support and interest for this ambitious project which will, one day, make a significant difference to the mental and physical well-being of the men in HMP Erlestoke. We have had some really generous donations in the past twelve months for which we are grateful, as they move us ever closer to our goal of building the pitch.

**Meek, R. (2018). A Sporting Chance – an independent review of sport in youth and adult prisons. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733184/a-sporting-chance-an-independent-review-sport-in-justice.pdf*

9. Fundraising Events

Fundraising throughout this reporting period has therefore been a combination of work to support existing projects and the All-Weather Sports Pitch appeal.

9.1 Bridge and lunch afternoon



Just over £1,900 was raised at a Bridge and Lunch afternoon held at Chitterne Village Hall, Wiltshire in September 2019. Thank you to the 56 Bridge players who joined us at this event and to Krys Berry who led the Bridge games. Thank you also to Sarah, Arthur and Rowena Gooch who provided the lunch, wine and raffle prizes.

9.2 Cartes Postales

Cartes Postales was a joint initiative between the Friends and Salisbury Museum* and enabled the Friends to reach a wide audience and generated some helpful publicity for both charities. It was heartening to have generated such enthusiastic support from the artists we approached; many leading artists including Sir Anthony Gormley, writers, actors and musicians as well as some hugely talented amateur artists, kindly donated 300 unique artworks (examples on the right). Each painting was given a number and vouchers were



sold online and in the Museum. A computer-generated random allocation of each voucher to one of the beautiful and unique postcards took place in October 2019. The cards, with a mount, were hand delivered where possible or posted to the lucky recipients and we hope that they were pleased with their artwork.

Over £14,000 was raised and shared between the Friends and the Museum. This included generous donations and the profits from a charity art auction held at the Museum on 25 October. The Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire, Sarah Troughton, was one of the first artists to paint a card for us. She also attended the auction on a terrible stormy night and read a letter of support from HRH the Duchess of Cornwall. Judith Squarey and Sarah Gooch are grateful to the Salisbury Museum staff and trustees who worked with them to raise funds for both charities.

A big thank you to everyone who created postcards, donated art for the auction and those who purchased the artworks. And thank you also to 'Wiltshire Life' magazine who included the project in their February 2020 issue.

**For more information about Salisbury Museum and their Salisbury Museum for Future Generations project, for which they were fundraising, please visit: <https://salisburymuseum.org.uk>*

9.3 Christmas Auction 2019



Every alternate year, we run an auction as part of our fundraising work and this year, we had raised £2,750 as the auction closed on the 4th January 2020. Thank you to all those who donated auction items and to those who bid.

9.4 Easyfundraising and Justgiving

We continued to encourage our 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. Thank you to our supporters who do this regularly when shopping online.

Thank you also to the individuals who donated online via <https://www.justgiving.com/friendsoferlestokeprison>

10. Financial Review – 2019/20

On 31 March 2020 the charity had funds in two accounts in the bank of £85,278 and two 2-year bonds valued at £100,000. This financial year (since 1 April 2019) we have had expenditure of £23,816 and receipts of £85,054. Funds earmarked for the all-weather sports pitch stand at £175,000. A summary of expenditure for the year to date, compared with the last financial year, is below:

Scheme	2019/2020 £	2018/2019 £
Transport Scheme	6395	7119
Art	6738	8511
Yoga	3130	4246
Drama	3345	878
Origami	2595 <i>(but with net profit of £4926)</i>	1660 <i>(but with net profit of £3226)</i>

Figure 2: Comparison of expenditure on core programmes between 2018/2019 and 2019/20

Our fundraising is a combination of personal donations, the proceeds of fundraising events and organisation/trust fund donations and grants, often for specific projects. A bedrock is the continuing steady stream of donations from our generous regular supporters. Fundraising this year has been successful with a significant impetus being our medium-term appeal to build an all-weather sports pitch under the leadership and guidance of Sarah Gooch, ably assisted by Carol Part. The trustees believe that the £175,000 earmarked for the pitch as of April 2020 is a tremendous achievement.

Carol Part and more latterly, Arthur Gooch have both assiduously managed our Gift Aid claims and we received £3,226 from HMRC during the financial year. We have revised our Gift Aid form to comply with GDPR and will ensure that, whilst some of our events cannot qualify, as much as possible can be claimed against Gift Aid.

Our expenditure is directly linked to the charity aims. Our spending has remained steady this year and the Transport Scheme with its dedicated coordinator is now mature. With great energy from Helen Holtam, origami has become a major net contributor to the charity having raised nearly £20,000 since 2017, through the sales of a range of original, quality cards and artwork.

Our budget for the financial year 2020/2021 remains at £29,836 anticipating the restart of Art classes to our regular provision of support to the offenders. This will now be affected 'pro rata' by the Covid-19 regime that has prevented us operating all of our activities since mid-March 2020. Although we will continue to fundraise for our core projects, much of our fundraising efforts will remain focused on the capital funds required for the all-weather sports pitch. Now that we have proved we have the capability to generate funds for this project ourselves, we will have a switch of emphasis and will apply for formal grants.

Our draft reserve policy is to ensure that we have sufficient funds to cope with a 25% drop in income without impacting key projects for 6 months and our reserve level is now more than in line with this policy. Our access to external grants has not been impacted by the growth in our reserves; in recognition that a growing proportion is earmarked for the all-weather sports pitch, although not technically a formal restricted fund.

We currently have a current account and an instant access savings account which is earning a basic level of interest. Our investment policy was reviewed last year, and we have added a second two-year £50,000 bond purchased in October 2019 due to mature in October 2021.

10.1 Receipts and Payments Accounts: 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020

	Total funds 2019/20	Last year 2018/19
	£	£
Receipts		
Fundraising Income	38,716	17,581
Grants Received	15,000	29,386
Donations Received	28,050	37,493
Gift Aid Income	3,226	-
Investment Income	62	59
Total receipts	85,054	84,518
Payments		
Transport Coordinator	6,201	7,072
Transport Scheme Expenses	216	81
Yoga	3,130	4,246
Art (Labour and Materials)	6,738	8,511
Drama	3,345	878
Health Training and Equipment	-	137
Equipment	-	486
Origami	2,595	1,660
Fundraising Costs	385	389
Insurance	490	470
Just Giving Subscription	180	216
Older Project Areas	36	500
Sundries	500	3,116
Sub total	23,817	27,765
Asset and investment purchases		
Cambridge and County	50,000	50,000
Total payments	73,817	77,765
Net of receipts/(payments)	11,237	6,754
Cash funds last year end	75,461	68,707
Cash funds this year end	85,278	75,461

Our financial year 2019/20 accounts were independently inspected by:
Chris Vaughan, Accountants, 195 Ermin Street, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 4NA
and are available on our website: www.friendsoferlestokeprison.com

11. 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 there is always more that can be done.

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 Friends work with HMP Erlestoke to help prisoners take responsibility for themselves and their future outside of the prison. The Friends 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 Friends offer 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, for example, mental illness, drug/alcohol addiction, abusive childhoods and poor education. 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.

12. The Year Ahead – 2020/21

Sustainability of the charity continues to remain a key objective for the trustees. The year ahead has started with unprecedented levels of uncertainty due to the coronavirus pandemic and the trustees are fully aware that we will have to be flexible and adaptive to adjust to these changing circumstances. At the time of writing, all programmes in the prison are on hold, as are our Transport Scheme and event planning; it is not yet known when we will be able to restart these.

We remain in contact with the Governor, our service providers and Transport Scheme volunteers and are ready to restart our programmes and transport as soon as it is safe to do so. Retention of service providers,

volunteers and trustees is central our sustainability and development.

With the uncertainty surrounding event planning for the foreseeable future, the trustees will focus on grant applications and donations to provide longer term support for the charity's programmes and will utilise our reserves if required longer term. Similarly, the appeal for the all-weather sports pitch will change focus from events and personal donations and will now begin to tap into previously unexplored funding sources.

The trustees are also mindful that new requests for funding, outside of our core programme provision, will have to be given careful consideration; sustainability of current programmes will continue to be given priority over new requests.

13. 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, or follow us on Twitter:

@friendserlepris

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

The Trustees

Friends of Erlestoke Prison

HMP Erlestoke

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Erlestoke

Devizes

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