

# News *for* Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of Guys Marsh Prison No 18



Friends of  
Guys Marsh  
Prison

practical support • better futures



## REHABILITATION CHANGING LIVES

The Friends of Guys Marsh helps support rehabilitation through funding of courses and training, and support for initiatives within the prison.

## SUPPORT KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Keeping families together is proven to be a key element to prevent re-offending. We help to enable opportunities for family visits and childcare.

## FUNDRAISING SECURING OUR FUTURE

This year has been particularly challenging for everyone. Turn to page 17 for ways you can ensure our work continues.

Contact us at [info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk](mailto:info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk)

Dear Friends,

The outlook seems much better than this time last year. Sadly for the men of Guys Marsh, whilst they will return to a more normal routine, not much else will have changed and their outlook is not as bright as for those of us destined to have more freedom.

The past year has seen the Prison adapt and manage the COVID situation as best they could. They suffered one outbreak and the men have had to endure a significant increase in the amount of time they are locked in their cells. This has meant that in-cell activities have been even more important than usual. FOGM has been able to help the prison by providing a range of items that have allowed the men to keep in touch with their families and occupy themselves during the period.

Whilst in the period of forced inactivity the Trustees have looked carefully at the past support we have offered and have re-focused our efforts on the men and the links to their families and to helping them grow as individuals. We continue to underwrite the transport from Gillingham as it is vital we remove as many obstacles to family visits as possible.

Through the hard work of all the trustees, but especially Steve Penson, we are in a sound financial position which, given the lack of fund raising events, is especially pleasing.

Thank you again for your continued support and, if you know of someone who might be interested in joining as a friend, please do ask them to get in touch.

*Giles Fearn - Friends of Guys Marsh Prison Chair*



READ THE LATEST INFORMATION  
VIA OUR WEBSITE

[www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk](http://www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk)



## 2020/2021 UPDATE

**The last year has presented many challenges. Tracy Harrison, Head of Reducing Offending at Guys Marsh summarises what has happened within the prison and how FOGM has been able to support staff and residents throughout this period.**

During March 2020 we saw the arrival of restrictions related to the Covid 19 outbreak. The wellbeing of staff and residents was paramount and stability was a massive priority within HMP Guys Marsh. It was evident that the quick progression of the virus in the community would have long lasting effects on everyone. Initially all activities were restricted and regimes only allowed for essential services; this included all partner agencies and supports such as Friends of Guys Marsh no longer being able to have face to face contact.

At this point, with the NHS becoming over stretched there were shortages of PPE across the country and Safety was a top priority. Residents felt they wanted to show appreciation of the essential services and find a way to support community initiatives. With the PPE shortage, discussions began around the possibility of creating laundry bags, face coverings and, eventually, hospital scrubs.

We found some willing volunteers and FOGM put a big shout out to the community asking for fabric, old sewing machines, bobbins and elastic. The Textiles shop was founded and men quickly became proficient pattern cutters and machinists, producing high quality PPE for hospitals, community carers and old people's homes.



FOGM then provided some new machines and sewing utensils to support making other saleable items. Unfortunately as the outbreaks escalated regimes became more restricted and the workshop had to close.

The good news is the data collected around retention and engagement has supported a formal textile workshop proposal and surveys are being completed currently. We have also had textile and sewing tutors in the community volunteering to work with men once restrictions have lifted. This has given an opportunity to provide a positive development route and employment outcomes.



During the pandemic we have been reliant on in-cell activity. FOGM have been really creative in considering ways to accommodate this safely and securely, and alleviate the boredoms and stresses of more time in cell. FOGM have provided in-cell packs around business and self-employment with a view to hold a 'Dragon's Den' style initiative in the future. They have supplied activities such as Arts and Crafts, board games, matchstick modelling and, more recently, juggling balls which went down a treat.

During this difficult time they have also paid special consideration to families helping support virtual visits with books and activities. At Christmas they helped by making a Christmas scene and supplying gifts for parents to give to their children. FOGM continue to support those leaving and resettling with the leaver's bags. This process has helped men to get back on their feet after release. We continue to discuss how this will evolve with the opening of the Employment Hub in April and the opportunity to collect interview clothing and to support interviews.

FOGM continues to support men to build opportunities and reduce reoffending. We have worked together during the pandemic to be flexible and creative. Thanks FOGM !!!!

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Come and meet us at the Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August.

Visit our stand and browse the lovely items made by men during the last year including bags, sofa arm tidies, cushion covers and clothing. Meet some of our trustees and catch up with news on what the charity has been doing recently.



JB was released from Guys Marsh just over a year ago and FOGM provided him with tools to set up a barbershop. He contacted us recently with an update:

*I briefly did some barbering in the Autumn time when the restrictions were lifted until we went into another lockdown but then found temporary work in a warehouse which has stayed open. I am in contact with a Barber who is opening a new shop on April 12 and hope to be able to join him in his shop once things are stable and hopefully open long term as I need a steady job. My aim is still to open my own shop but because of the complications this year I'm not at that point yet but it is still one of my long term goals.*

*From the money I earnt barbering I have been able to complete my motorbike CBT test and purchase my own 125cc bike. This has helped me get to appointments, employment and given me freedom that I haven't had in the past.*

*I would like to say thank you for your help with my progression.*



## CHALLENGES ON BOTH SIDES

None of us anticipated on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, as we raised our glasses and toasted in the new year, the big adjustments we would need to make in the unprecedented year of 2020. Of course, some things remained unchanged; men were sentenced to prison, men were released from prison – but either side of the wall they found themselves in an even more difficult world to negotiate than normal.

### On the outside...

The Friends continued their magnificent support, meaning the Trustees were able to update and enhance the Leavers Bags, which are a much valued, appreciated and useful offering to those not being released to the home environment.

We have added in a pack of face masks and hand sanitizer; so necessary for any social interaction these days, distanced or otherwise, and have also been able to include a waterproof cagoule to help weather the weather!

Those still serving their sentences have had to contend with months of extended lockdown with few activities taking place, education suspended and even exercise time reduced. All this on top of a suspension of visits. On advice from the prison management we supplied some in-cell entertainment and focus in the shape of juggling balls and modelling matches.



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# KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Keeping families together is known to be one of the best ways to prevent men reoffending. Much of FOGM's work is focussed on this, particularly the support for a Barnardo's Play Worker, transport provision on visit days and initiatives such as the 'safe and sound selfie' project featured on the previous page. We were unable to run our usual Christmas Card competition this year but Amie Derrick, Barnardo's Family Engagement Worker at Guys Marsh, used social media to encourage children to design cards which FOGM then printed to send to their fathers, friends and family. Here are some of the designs:



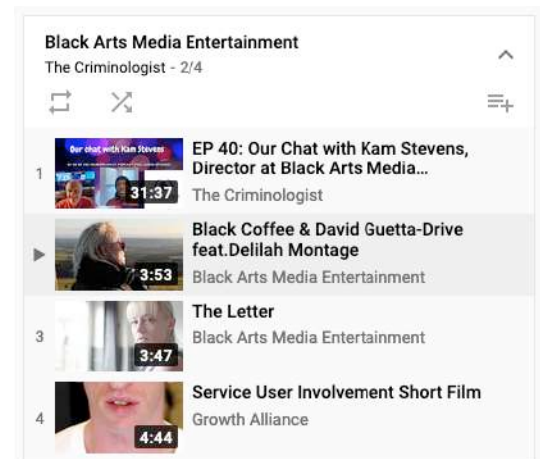
## SPOTLIGHT ON AN INDIVIDUAL

Since release, Kam has set up his own media company. He wrote the play 'Choices' in prison which was staged at Guys Marsh in 2019. He was a big influence in promoting the hugely successful Growth Project run by Dr Sarah Lewis.

He recently featured in a podcast for a criminologist channel in the USA. He talked very positively about the opportunities for rehabilitation he was given at Guys Marsh and about how time in custody had changed his thinking, especially the perception that prisoners are one time of person. On release he moved his life away from where he had lived. After only 6 months out of prison Kam has been invited to work with the senior management team of a prison to develop a project similar to the one he was involved in at Guys Marsh. You can listen to the podcast (number EP40) at [www.theparagongroupplc.libsyn.com](http://www.theparagongroupplc.libsyn.com)

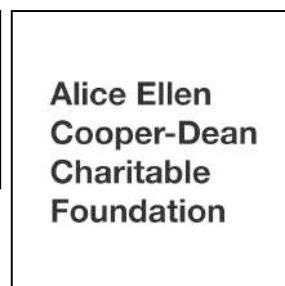
### Kam speaking on the podcast:

*"who do you want to be your neighbour – someone who has been encouraged and inspired to turn their life around and do something different, or someone who has been caged and treated like an animal? Everybody makes mistakes in their life but there is always a reason behind why people offend. Don't give up on people, everyone has the ability to change given the right opportunities."*



## A BIG THANK YOU

We are hugely grateful to the support of you, our Friends, over the last year; without your donations we would not be able to provide opportunities for men to improve their lives. During the covid epidemic we also received generous donations from the following trusts, helping us through this difficult time.



# A YEAR IN THE LIFE

Last year we were delighted to hear that Jabril, a resident at Guys Marsh had won a Koestler Arts “*Platinum Award*”, the highest award possible. Jabril had been working on his music with support from Toby Langton-Gilks who works with residents to produce pieces of music. Here Toby gives us an insight into how covid affected his ability to work in the prison and the efforts he made to maintain a vital link with the men inside:

## 23rd March 2020

“What virus?” the (subsequently “Sectioned”) inmate asked.

I was patiently *trying* to explain to him I would be isolating for 14 days, after frantically arranging to get my Son back from Bogota, Colombia, just hours before it closed its borders (for *many* months). Little did I know then that it would be mid-August before I’d return to HMP Guys Marsh.

## Mid May 2020

I submit a “Covid-19 Safety Aware” version of my workshops to the prison management.

## Mid-August 2020

3 months later I was allowed to restart my risk-assessed workshops - largely thanks to the personal support and intervention of the Chaplains and No.1 Governor.

Thereafter, running 5 days a week morning and afternoon, and with strictly socially distanced individual attendees, I was not only covering my on-going weekly provision but also, each 5 day week, catching-up 1.5 weeks of the lost Lockdown(1) provision as well.

So far, HMP Guys Marsh had only experienced 1 potential Covid-19 case - a wing being isolated following a Prison Officer testing positive when schools went back in September.

By November all cancelled Lockdown(1) sessions had been caught-up and delivered. I continued to run my workshops throughout Lockdown(2) and by late December had even managed to “bank” a few extra weeks provision - in the event a future lockdown might scupper the works again.



#### 4th January 2021

I returned to the Music Room, following Boris' (rather questionable) Lockdown relaxation over Xmas (and the subsequent explosion in cases, nationally). I immediately join the new weekly Prison self-testing regime.

#### 7th January 2021

Guys Marsh suddenly returned to "Level 4" Covid-19 status, all nonessential Staff are instructed to vacate the premises, effective immediately.

#### 9th January 2021

My test result comes back: negative. By late January, Covid cases were skyrocketing - Guys Marsh designated an "Outbreak Centre" and eventually topping nearly 150 confirmed cases in February, with up to 50 Staff having to self-isolate. Thankfully, very few needed to be hospitalised.



#### 10th March 2021

As I write, the worst appears to have passed and there is only 1 case currently at Guys Marsh. However, other prisons in our "cluster" are not faring so well - both HMP Earlestone and HMP The Verne currently have over 100 cases each.

I don't expect to be allowed back in to HMP Guys Marsh for maybe another 6-8 weeks, minimum. When I do return, however, it'll be straight back to the 5 days a week regime. Sadly though, it looks as though this year's Koestler Arts Award applicants will fall by the wayside.

Looking forward, I'm confident that by the end of 2021 all (and some extra) Urban Beat Shop provision will have been successfully delivered for the inmates.

#### 12th March 2021

I get my 1st dose of the Vaccine - Amen to that.

#### Toby Langton-Gilks

Tutor, Urban Beat Shop music course. HMP Guys Marsh

## LOOKING AHEAD

The Governor of Guys Marsh, Ian Walters gives us an update on plans for the prison.

As you can imagine, it has been a challenging 12 months for the prison, culminating in a COVID outbreak in January/February 2021 which impacted significantly upon staff and prisoners alike. We have seen a considerable reduction in COVID cases in recent weeks and we are expecting to have our outbreak status closed in early April. This will enable the establishment to increase face to face delivery on wings of Education, Resettlement, Drug Services and reinstatement of programmes. Visits will recommence, aligned with fewer travel restrictions in the community, followed by reinstatement of a wider regime to include classroom based Education, indoor PE, workshops and mixed household group work.

We have successfully secured funding from PSPI (Private Sector Prison Industries) to open a new textiles workshop (a welcome development from the early COVID textiles workshop) as well as development of the electrical repair workshop. This, alongside a new contract with Bylor (manufacturing for Hinckley Point) and reinstatement of existing workshops with Hamiltons, Bulk Hardware and Weldmar, will ensure we have an improved work offer for men who have spent so many weeks and months restricted to residential based activities. We will also be welcoming the charity CLINK into the prison from April who will be delivering additional qualifications in the kitchen alongside the existing programme from Weston College. The Improvement Notice remains in place with Weston College and we are optimistic that Education quality will improve as a result of this increased scrutiny.

Planning for the prison expansion continues at a pace and detailed design work has been undertaken in recent weeks. The proposed improvements, subject to financial approval include:

- Two new wings for 180 residents
- New outdoor sports pitch on the site of Wessex (demolition is under way)
- A new Offender Management Unit office
- Increased kitchen footprint
- Improvements to the existing Healthcare provision including an improved waiting area, additional treatment rooms and dispensary
- A new industries complex will replace the existing bricks, plastering and MOPS workshop and provide an NVQ catering kitchen and 3 additional large workshops

Lots going on as you can see, I hope this is useful and I look forward to seeing FOGM members back in the prison soon!

# BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Aimee Derrick, Barnardo's Family Engagement Worker at Guys Marsh, contacted us as with a request for books. She said "Children's books are a passion of mine and the following books, linked to having a parent in prison, would be useful to have copies of in the visiting hall and for use in the parenting course when that is running again. Parents can use the books as a tool for normalising talking about prison and as a tool to prompt children to ask any questions they might not otherwise have an opportunity to ask. I can use the books to show parents how to talk to children about difficult things in a child friendly, age appropriate way." The Friends have purchased a range of books for use in the Visiting Centre, providing a much needed resource to help keep families together, one of our primary aims.



We were delighted that Julie, whose business is the Grassroots Garden / Aquatic centre in Henstridge, was kind enough to give space in her nursery for a FOGM stall, during the run up to Christmas, to display and sell many items made by the men in the sewing department. She has a great interest in Guys Marsh and until lockdown prevented visits she was working as a listener; a valuable facility for many of the men.



# BOBBIE PRIMROSE

The last year has seen many significant changes and for FOGM one of these was when Bobbie Primrose stepped down as a Trustee. She was the last of the founding committee to be involved and we are very sad to see her go.

Bobbie was the driving force behind many successes and her deep knowledge of the prison and all its workings proved invaluable at guiding new Chairs and trustees through the myriad complexities of supporting the men and staff in Guys Marsh.

She maintained very close links with the other charities working within the prison and this enhanced the output and support we were able to offer. The amount of time she gave to both FOGM and the prison went beyond what could be fairly asked of any volunteer. It showed her deep belief in what FOGM aims to achieve; the positive outcomes possible if the men inside Guys Marsh are given help and respect.

I would like to thank Bobbie sincerely for all she did for all the men and staff at Guys Marsh and also for the help she gave to successive Chairs and trustees.

*Giles Fearn, Friends of Guys Marsh Chair*



## Looking back and looking forward

*Looking back over my 30 years involvement in Guys Marsh in various voluntary roles it is fascinating to remember how much the prison has changed from being an open establishment for young offenders when it had no fence, most buildings were remnants from its Borstal days (wooden huts) and had a harsh attitude to offenders. Punishment was the main purpose of custody with little availability for any realistic rehabilitation although there were some good workshops (car mechanics, painting, decorating, brick and carpentry). Over this time the prison has progressed through many stages to become the modern secure category C prison for Adult males that it is today.*

*Thankfully attitudes have progressed into a more humane approach, aimed at returning inmates to society as law abiding, respectful citizens, with programmes and staff training designed to progress this change.*

*During this time my experience led to being part of FOGM's formation in 2004. It is too long a story to tell but is interesting to reflect how FOGM was formed after the six of us decided a charity was needed to aid rehabilitation in Guys Marsh and to see how much we have grown and achieved. It is always rewarding to see our initiatives bear fruit when we receive thanks for how they have turned some men's lives around, given our help. Also to see that the initial projects we set up have remained of stable importance in keeping families united.*

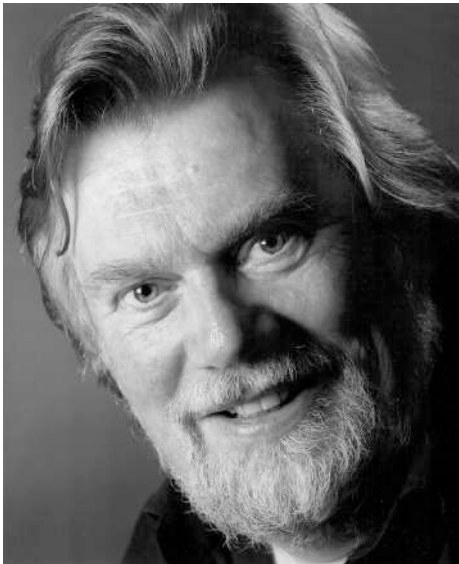
*I was the last remaining founding member still in place by 2020. It was not always easy for us to maintain the sufficient number of members to cover all our projects but we managed to keep going and now it is great that we have a healthy number of dedicated, innovative trustees. Our autumn AGM was obviously the appropriate time for me to step down from the committee which I leave knowing that our charity is in good and very capable hands. It has been my privilege to meet and work with so many lovely people and gain an understanding of the challenges of the men we strive to help.*

*Looking forward FOGM, working in close collaboration with the Senior Management team, have many planned initiatives for when normal life resumes. That is not to say that the trustees have been idle since Covid-19 restrictions began, far from it - I am sure you will read about all their interesting work behind the scenes in this newsletter. It is great to feel that FOGM's future is now safe and secure and I look forward to all the new ideas fruitfully carried forward with the easing of present restrictions.*

*Lastly I wish my trustee friends and staff at Guys Marsh every success and sincerely thank them and all our loyal Friends for the invaluable, appreciative support you have given me personally and the charity over my years with FOGM.*

*Go well and thanks again,*

*Roberta*



Geoffrey Horton has recently joined the trustees of FOGM and brings with him a wealth of experience from his civil service career where he served as an immigration officer, chief immigration officer, contract manager for the Border Force arrest and restraint training, and finally as a Grade 7 business manager in the Leadership & Change Directorate at the Home Office. Whilst working in the enforcement field in Central London he attended over 50 custody suites in the Metropolitan Police area and visited all of the London prisons on business.

He also worked with an ex-prison officer delivering training programmes explaining the policies and processes of immigration detention to serving prison officers. Before the detention of immigration detainees was contracted out to the private sector he managed a detention centre near Gatwick Airport and, following a high profile criminal investigation into passport fraud, he wrote and delivered a course in evidence gathering and court procedures to immigration officers and their managers. He is also a qualified counter fraud investigator.

He is sensitive to the prison environment and the demands it puts on both the staff and the inmates. Rehabilitation is key and he is enthusiastic in his role to support the work of FOGM.



## FRIENDS OF GUYS MARSH PRISON (FOGM) SUBSCRIPTION FORM

☐

I wish to renew my subscription.

☐

I wish to become a Friend to support FOGM's work (please say how you heard about us)

.....

**NAME:** .....

**ADDRESS:** .....

.....

**Email:** .....

**Data protection:** By providing the above information you consent to it being kept on FOGM's database to receive our news. We confirm that your details will not be passed to, or shared with, any other organisation. **You may withdraw your consent at any time.**

**Annual subscription:** £10 ..... £20 ..... £25 ..... £50 ..... Other £ .....

As an example, £45 pays for three fully kitted leavers' bags given to men locating to a hostel or no fixed abode. £80 pays for a Play Worker to work for a whole weekend with children visiting their fathers.

I enclose a cheque for £ ..... made payable to: **Friends of Guys Marsh Prison**

**I would like to pay by standing order - please send me a form - Yes / No**

**Date:** .....

**Gift Aid declaration:** Please sign below if you are a UK taxpayer and wish us to Reclaim tax paid on your donations which will increase its value to us by 25%. This is only allowable provided you have paid at least as much tax from income or Capital Gains as we are reclaiming.

**Signed:** .....

**Please send form and cheque to: The Treasurer, Friends of Guys Marsh Prison, HMP Guys Marsh, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 0AH**



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In appreciation of your valuable support,  
financial or in kind:

- The Valentine Trust
- Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Trust
- Seven Anonymous Donors
- Pitt-Rivers Charitable Trust
- H. H. Charitable Trust
- Shaftesbury Society of Quakers
- Tom's Field
- Salisbury Diocese Mothers Union
- Rachel Davies
- FOGM Friends & Volunteers
- Guys Marsh Inmates charitable donations
- Daniel House ACCA, MAAT
- Dorset Community Action
- Tesco Bags of Help
- Asda
- Garfield Weston Foundation

For partnership working

- Nordcat (North Dorset Community Transport)
- Barnardo's
- Marie Waterman (Volunteer Centre & Clinks)
- G.M Chaplaincy Team
- Dr Sarah Lewis (Prison Reform Solutions)
- Brenda Birt ( North Dorset Mothers Union)

## OUR MISSION

### FRIENDS OF GUYS MARSH PRISON MISSION STATEMENT

To promote and support for the benefit of the public at large (in partnership with staff and governors) viable programmes and initiatives aimed at the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders who are, or who have been, inmates of HMP Guys Marsh.



Friends of  
Guys Marsh  
Prison

practical support • better futures

Charity No. 1168102

[www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk](http://www.friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk)

[info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk](mailto:info@friendsofguysmarsh.co.uk)

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**Lifetime Presidents**

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