

THE GALLERY

Prison officer
Alan Jarvis
brought in
the birds



HATCH A PLAN

Edinburgh is home to 19 laying hens and two roosters

A PRISON officer at Edinburgh hatched a cunning plan that has provided an unusual type of learning for the women in the prison.

Prisoners built sheds in the carpentry workshops which are now home to 19 laying hens and two roosters – the sheds have been named 'The Henitentiary'.

The free-range birds are cared for by female prisoners and Alan Jarvis, the regimes officer who has kept poultry at home for years.

He said: "We have already seen the positive impact on

the wellbeing of the women taking part, and we've had great feedback. I'm very keen to expand the project in future to include benefits for the community, by selling the eggs, for example."

The women who care for the animals were selected after an interview process and they have the opportunity to gain City and Guild qualifications in animal care.

Taking part in activities outdoors also helps to keep them fit.

It is hoped the experience will help the women in finding employment upon release.



EVENT WAS LEARNING CURVE FOR FAMILIES

AN event for the families of prisoners serving their sentences in Shotts was held in the community instead of the prison.

The aim was to build on previous events that were held within Shotts to promote and develop family links. However, this time the event was held in the Renfield Centre in Glasgow.

The project was organised by prison-based staff members and Families Outside.

On the day, Paul Baker, through care manager; Jane Baker, links centre officer; Dorothy Russell, prison chaplain; John McKenna, prison based social



Families could drop in and ask questions



worker; and Carrie Smith from Families Outside were all involved.

Paul said: "The day was a great success. The prisoners' families asked us about the

various services that we can provide for prisoners within Shotts.

"They were pleasantly surprised with the opportunities that are available and how these can contribute positively. It was a very worthwhile event."

CLASS RAISES FUNDS FOR KIDS' HOSPITAL

THE Citizenship Class at Cornton Vale raised £158 for Yorkhill Children's Hospital.

The women held the fundraiser to collect money for sky ceilings for treatment rooms – light panels that fit into the ceiling to recreate the sky inside. The event included a session by performance poet Anita Govan. Also, one of the women in the Citizenship Class played her guitar and sang two of her own songs, and the Guitar Group performed several songs.

The class found the experience extremely positive and its students are already talking about future events.

TURNING A NEW LEAF



Young people at Polmont attempt to challenge negative stereotypes

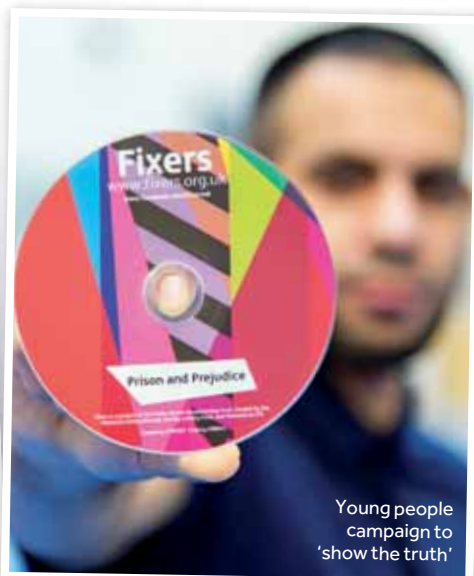
YOUNG people from Polmont have made a short film to try to change the negative views people have of them.

The group worked with national charity Fixers, which supports young people aged 16-25 to tackle any issue that matters to them.

They made a film called 'Prison and Prejudice' which gives an insight into the reality of life behind bars.

Supported by Scottish Prison Service staff in Polmont, as well as the Youth Work service delivered by Barnado's Scotland and Caledonia Youth, the 17 young people took part in workshops where they put together a script for the short documentary.

Lead fixer Craig, 18, has been in Polmont since 2011. He said: "Society has a very negative perception of us and the media



Young people campaign to 'show the truth'

doesn't help. I hope our Fixers campaign will raise awareness of the efforts we're making to improve our lives.

"We wanted our campaign to show the truth. Our fundraising group has raised more than £2,000 for different charities. Nobody hears about these achievements – that's the point behind our film."

Sue Brookes, governor at Polmont, added: "It's heartening to see how the young people have embraced the opportunity to deliver that message with confidence and maturity."

NEW AREA FOR CHILD VISITS

Room redecorated to make inviting space



Area refurbished for visiting children



Families should feel comfortable and welcome



A VISITING area in Barlinnie has been decorated by prisoners to make it more welcoming for children.

The room is now a bright and inviting space, with a soft play area and a library corner for little ones to enjoy during visits.

Aileen Campbell MSP visited the prison to officially open the new room.

The Minister for Children and Young People was also given a tour of the prison visits facility.

She said: "This facility recognises that prison can be a hugely intimidating place for children and young people visiting a parent and that trying to reduce that is not just the right thing to do for the children, but is also important in preventing reoffending."

The new area was the result of the hard

work of partners and SPS staff involved in the prison's Family Strategy Group.

At Barlinnie, plans for 2014 include expanding the children's library in the visits area, in partnership with Glasgow Library Service, as well as creating breakfast and homework clubs.

Derek McGill, governor of Barlinnie, said: "I'm delighted that the Minister has opened this excellent new facility for us, and I look forward to Barlinnie creating even more opportunities in the future for those in custody to maintain positive relationships with their children."

The money for the project came from the prison's Common Good Fund, which is made up of a percentage of prisoners' wages and profits from the prison canteen.

THE LIFE OF A MODERATOR



The Moderator spoke about her role during her visit to Polmont

THE Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland paid a visit to Polmont and the young people were interested to learn about her role.

Rt Rev Lorna Hood was asked "So what does a Moderator do?" and her reply was "That's a good question!"

Lorna visited Polmont during her week-long trip to The Presbytery of Falkirk, which is a part of a Moderator's role.

During her visit, Lorna, with her husband Peter, was shown the work of chaplaincy by Rev Donald Scott and the chaplaincy team.

She was also interviewed for Inside Radio and visited a residential area and some of the workshops where young offenders are involved in learning new skills and helping communities.

Rev Scott said: "The Moderator told me how impressed she was with the work being done, and the commitment and enthusiasm of staff."

In keeping with our approach as a learning environment, by the time Lorna left, some young offenders knew a bit more about what the Moderator does.



GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

GREENOCK recognises the value of Restorative Practices, which allow prisoners to give back to the community.

Long-term prisoners work in the community as part of their progression.

In one project, Greenock made a real change to a facility that had become almost unusable.

This included grass-cutting and weeding to an area in Kilmacolm used by the Scouts.

Another project was the painting of St Fergus community centre in Ferguslie Park, Paisley.

One of the Greenock chaplaincy team suggested providing hot meals to those in need in the community.

Painter John McGeachey and his class spent two weeks transforming a facility where meals could be prepared.

In partnership with those on Community Payback Order, Greenock provided painters for a programme of railing painting across Inverclyde.

Prisoners also transformed charity Reach for Autism's new premises, which was in disrepair.

The prison is also committed to repairing a large section of mono-blocking and to building a ramp for disabled access and they will provide a painter and decorator to carry out the work.

Through-care support

THROUGH-CARE support officers are now at Greenock where they aim to reduce reoffending.

Their aim is to build on the personal officer role while in custody and extend this into the first part of community life after prison.

The approach will include delivering the needs identified in the Community Integration Plan (CIP) and pre-release case conference and supporting the individual on liberation to attend appointments.

It will also provide ongoing support and advice and engage with community partners, ensuring a focus on continued support for individuals.

A promising initiative

GREENOCK has an officer dedicated two days per week to linking willing prisoners into voluntary sector organisations.

This builds on the Unlocking Potential and Transforming Lives initiative, which is still in its early stages but proving promising.

DEDICATION RECOGNISED

Stephen awarded Volunteer of the Year for helping addicts

A DEDICATED volunteer, formerly from Barlinnie, has been awarded Volunteer of the Year for his work with Phoenix Futures Scotland and their support service, Recovery through Nature (RtN).

Stephen Gordon was a long-term prisoner at Barlinnie, who began his term with little social skills and a background of addiction. While in prison, he worked exceptionally hard to earn two John Muir Awards and an Open College Network accreditation in Environmental Conservation.

In preparation for his release into the community, he worked on placement with RtN for a year. There, he thrived to the point that he spent

recent months working hard on his social skills in order to become a co-facilitator alongside group leaders.

Residential unit manager Gerry Watt said: "Stephen has a real hang on what addiction does and how it impacts on lives and how it could potentially lead to a life sentence in prison. He is going to use his experience to explain this to people who may be at the start of that journey."

Stephen has entered into the last phase of his up-and-coming liberation and has moved into an open estate. He continues to play a vital role with Phoenix Futures and will continue to do so upon his release.

A LITTLE MORE CONVERSATION IN PERTH

A SUCCESSFUL conversation café was held for 64 people in Perth by the Scottish Recovery Consortium (SRC).

A range of people attended the Across The Gate event – some were in recovery, some were treatment staff and some worked within the communities served by the prison.

The 'world café' style conversation café asked people a variety of questions regarding recovery and also if there was anything they could do to help.

Many small actions were suggested. For example, when you enter prison you can say that you would prefer a smoking or non-smoking cell.

The suggestion of saying you would prefer to be paired with



someone else trying to work on their recovery was put to the group.

If two people in recovery could support each other through their time in prison, this could be like the support

that is offered outside the prison gates.

The Scottish Recovery Consortium would like to thank everyone who helped to make the Across the Gate event possible in Perth.



RADIO PRESENTER POPS IN TO CHAT

THE Learning Centre in Greenock Prison recently welcomed a visit from a Smooth Radio presenter.

Jenny Farish popped in to help resident prison DJ Peter Bell record a show for Greenock's station Radio Release. She kindly agreed to visit the prison after receiving a letter written by Peter as part of an assignment in his English class.

While there, Jenny took part in a question-and-answer session, recorded jingles and appeared as a guest presenter on Peter's regular Friday Love Zone show. The show went really well and it is hoped this will be the first of many guest slots.



Jenny guest presented the Friday Love Zone

ART-TASTIC AT CORNTON VALE



Artists proudly show off their hard work at the exhibition



WOMEN at Cornton Vale have taken part in an arts project with help from the University of Stirling.

Prisoners were involved in 'Create and Curate', which was supported by funding from Scottish Government agency Education Scotland.

They all worked hard to create their own artworks as well as curating an exhibition using works which were borrowed from the university's extensive art collection.

The exhibition launched on International Women's Day and will be on show in the prison for six months. It will then transfer to the university for a public show from August this year.

Sarah Bromage from the university said: "We're pleased to be participating in the Create and Curate project, expanding awareness of our art collection."

The project included creative writing, student placement and workshops.

ARTISTIC FLAIR

ASPIRING artists in Greenock have recently taken part in an exciting new project along with students from the Glasgow School of Art.

They went to six sessions which were held to help them explore their artistic talents and express themselves through art.

This was the first time many of the prisoners had even picked up a paint brush and, by the end of the project, they had produced outstanding pieces of work.

Glasgow School of Art students Chris Silver and Catriona Reid were delighted with the end results and how much the artists not only learned new skills, but also grew in confidence as the weeks progressed.

The project finished with an exhibition of the work within the visitor centre of the prison, which was also attended by the families of the budding new artists who were able to come and see how far they had all come.



Teaching young people to make better financial decisions



MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION

Competition teaches young people about financial capability

YOUNG people at Polmont are making fantastic progress in this year's 'Money for Life' challenge.

The national competition is aimed at teaching 16 to 25-year-olds financial capability.

The four groups put forward by the young people were Sandwich Savers, Frugal Fashion, Fit for Free and Budget Busters.

Sandwich Savers put emphasis on savings that can be made by making lunch at home. Frugal Fashion aimed to show expensive clothes are not always best value. Fit for Free showed that exercising at home or outside would cut down on gym membership costs and gave exercise manuals and practical demonstrations.

Budget Busters was a combination



of 'needs versus wants', 'premium products versus own-brand products' and information about spending and borrowing money.

The effort put into the projects culminated in a showcase within Polmont, where the young people presented and displayed their work for invited guests.

The young people also had the opportunity to gain SQA awards in Communication, Numeracy, ICT and Working with Others.

Audrey Mitchell, Learning Centre manager at Polmont, said: "This is exactly the kind of learning that appeals to students, delivered in a fun and interactive way.

"Managing money is important to all of us and it is vital that these young men can make informed decisions based on what they have learned in the projects."

Claire Cannon from Fife College added: "The projects were an amazing success.

"It is an achievement everyone should be proud of."

A RESPECTFUL CONVERSATION

A MUSLIM and Christian conversation around Lent and Ramadan proved to be a huge hit when it took place in Perth.

Rev Ken Russell welcomed everyone and explained that the chaplaincy team was made up of people from different religious traditions and Father Andrew outlined fasting, or giving something up, which is often done by many people throughout Lent.

Feedback from the 16 prisoners in attendance was positive and they said they would welcome similar events.

The discussion was followed by biscuits and chocolate muffins with tea and coffee, courtesy of the Equality & Diversity department.

WOULD YOU FIND A PSP HELPFUL?

SPECIAL projects are helping prisoners plan for the future by providing support before and after release.

Public Social Partnerships (PSPs) bring together statutory and voluntary organisations to deliver services more effectively.

Young men aged 16-21 at Polmont can join the successful Moving On scheme. Statistics show around 80 per cent of participants did not return to prison within two years. Talks about Moving On – run by Action for Children and Barnardos Scotland – are run during the prison admission process.

Joe Bryers, from Action for Children Scotland, said: "Lots of the men are very skilled. By working with them, in prison and after their release, we can identify and build on these skills."

Mentoring PSP New Routes helps young men serving short-term sentences across Scotland. They can relate to their mentors, many of whom

are ex-offenders. One prisoner, Frank, is coping well since his mentor helped him to access health and benefits services to adopt a more positive approach to his lifestyle.

Women on remand or serving short-term sentences can access practical and emotional support from a Shine mentor for at least six months.

At Low Moss, Prisoner Support Pathway provides access to a range of services. Brian, 32, who has been in and out of prison for 12 years, was one of the first to sign up. Prisoner Support Pathway has helped him sort out housing, benefits and finding a doctor. He continues to receive that much-needed support.

He said: "I never had that before – I was just put out the door. You're unsure what's going to happen. This time I had PSP there, and that was a huge help."

To find out if you're able to access the PSP, ask your hall staff for more information.

PRISONERS HAVE THEIR WORK ON DISPLAY IN GALLERY



ARTISTS' BRUSH WITH SUCCESS

ARTWORK by prisoners in Inverness is being showcased in a town centre gallery.

Inverness Museum and Art Gallery recently launched 'Outside the Box', an exhibition of art produced by prisoners participating in the Fife College learning programmes at Inverness.

The exhibition, which ran in the venue's Community Gallery

and Room to Discover, featured a series of paintings inspired by a book in the Learning Centre library based on the work of The Glasgow Boys, a group of painters who made the city famous in the art world in the 1800s.

The artists' use of light, composition and colour inspired the prisoners to embrace the same technique. Every prisoner

in Inverness is encouraged to engage in learning that will build confidence and self-esteem, as well as gain new skills and qualifications.

This can lead to better employment opportunities or encourage them to pursue further education.

Participating in the Learning Centre can allow prisoners to gain valuable qualifications in literacy, numeracy and the creative arts.

This is the second time artwork has been displayed, following last year's very successful 'Inside Out' exhibition.

The latest event is further evidence of the strong

relationship between the prison's Learning Centre and the museum's engagement programme.

Those who took part have been describing their experiences of the Learning Centre and the opportunities given to them in custody.

One prisoner said: "Prison can be an emotional and daunting experience, with some people feeling like worthless failures who have no hope of going anywhere in life. Education offers prisoners the support we need to change our lives, in an attempt at, hopefully, changing these thoughts and feelings."

PROMOTING ANTI-VIOLENCE IN GREENOCK

FOR the second year in a row, the Learning Centre at Greenock ran a week-long project promoting anti-violence to coincide with Prisoner Week.

Workshops on prostitution and human trafficking, verbal abuse and discrimination, domestic violence and knife crime were held.

There were guest speakers from the local Women's Aid organisation as well as a film, a presentation and lots of discussion to engage students and staff alike.

To finish off the successful week a Conversation Café was held in the art room which the Inverclyde Anti-Knife Group (IAKG) attended to discuss knife crime.

The cookery class baked cakes for the event and they decorated one with the IAKG's logo as a mark



The anti-violence event was hailed as a success

of respect and to make them all feel welcome.

The week was enhanced by an

anti-violence poster competition and the lucky winners

received cash prizes to spend in the canteen.

Those involved in the event said that this was a great way to spend Prisoner Week and there are hopes to repeat it next year.



Football fans are super fit

FITNESS fanatics at Perth took part in a football training initiative which has led to healthy eating, weight loss and an increase in self-esteem.

Perth found out about the Football Fans in Training (FFIT) initiative in early 2012 when prison officer Ally Christie attended a session at his local SPL club, St Johnstone FC.

Ally's hard work paid off when he lost weight. Then Perth's physical education instructor, Craig Mailer, thought he could introduce it to the prison.

Craig said: "I thought the programme could be adapted to work successfully in Perth. We made contact with the FFIT research team at Glasgow University and, fortunately, they had funding available to do further research into the benefits of the FFIT programme.

"Members of the research team have provided training for the staff delivering the programme, they have helped us adapt the programme for our setting and for our prisoner population



The Football Fans in Training (FFIT) project has been a success at Perth



and they have helped us liaise with our local SPL teams – St Johnstone FC and Dundee United FC."

Craig added: "We are delighted with the progress many of the prisoners who have participated in FFIT have already made. They have changed their lifestyles, are now eating more healthily, have lost weight and increased their self-esteem.

"Many of them have started coming to the gym for the first time and are succeeding in cutting down on some of the unhealthy snacks they can purchase from the canteen. We are confident that the programme will be sustainable going forward."

GROUP WORKS OUT TOGETHER

Aim of project is to create community link

AN active group from Greenock has been working up a sweat to give something back to the local community.

Together with The Learning Centre, Health and Fitness Centre and local day centres for the disabled, they make up the Fit Together group.

The group meets in the prison gym one afternoon each week and carries out a variety of games, fitness and social activities. The group was started with the aim of creating a link between the prison and the community.

Five prisoners involved have recently achieved the SQA qualification Preparing to Work with People with Special Needs and took part in an awards ceremony to reward all of their achievements.



Pictured are (from left) John, Kenny, Thomas, Gavin and Robert