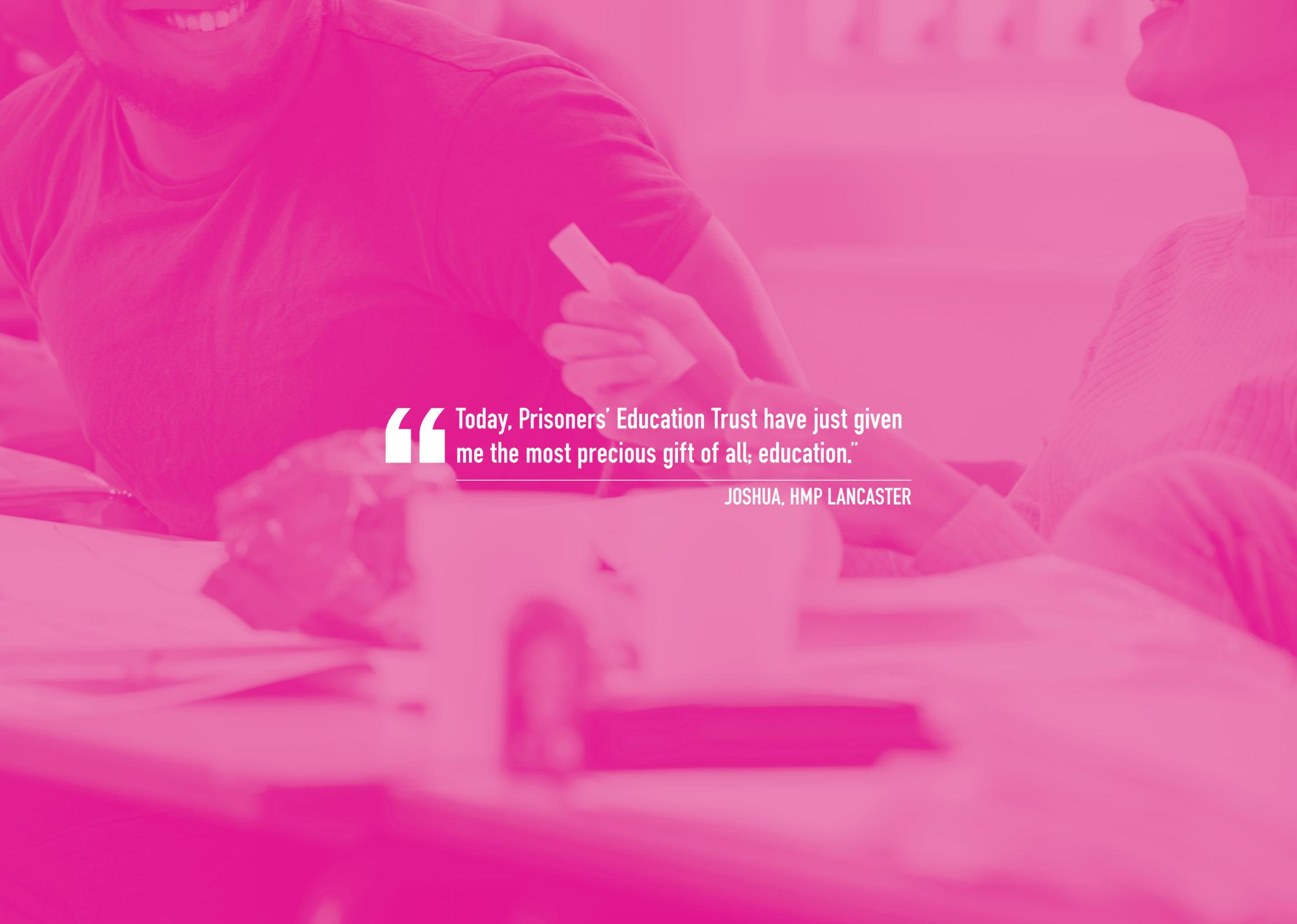




Prisoners'
Education
TRUST

Strategy 2018 – 2020



“ Today, Prisoners’ Education Trust have just given me the most precious gift of all, education.”

JOSHUA, HMP LANCASTER

Introduction

We have come a long way in 29 years

Applications for our distance learning courses and arts materials are at record levels. We have grown to 20 expert staff and increasing numbers of dedicated volunteers. Our headquarters is near Westminster and our first regional office is opposite Cardiff castle. We have a thriving network of alumni whom we greatly value as our ambassadors and advisors. We have established the influential Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA) which has resulted in prison education being central to the prison reform policy agenda. We are the 'go to' organisation for the sector on all issues relating to prison education.

This new three-year strategy is designed to deepen both our impact and our influence. It will allow us to provide more, and more meaningful, learning opportunities for people in prison, and to change the system for the better by making a compelling and well-evidenced case for the value of learning. At the heart of this strategy are learners themselves. We will embed their voice and participation throughout all aspects of our work, and we will encourage the whole sector to do likewise.

PET is ambitious, but we must also be adaptive.

Upcoming changes to the prison system, such as the advent of governor autonomy over education budgets, and the increasing digitisation of our prisons, will change the way education is both commissioned and delivered. We cannot afford to ignore these opportunities if we are to stay relevant and realise the potential to enhance the help we can offer.

We do not underestimate the scale of the challenge for an organisation that has worked with a centrally managed and largely paper-based prison service for the last 29 years. This strategy helps us to prepare for these changes and to grasp the opportunities offered by them. Vitally, we will work closer with individual prisons and governors through a regional approach, and we will update our processes and services to align with the prison digital rollout.

In doing so, we will be helped by a diverse range of partners, collaborators and influencers; with prisons and prison staff, and most importantly by our learners. Listening to our learners has always been a key part of our ethos, and during this period of change embracing their views and responding to their needs will be vital. As evidence emerges of stark disproportionality in the criminal justice system, embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our work is more important than ever. All of our learners must be at the heart of all we do.

As we approach 2020, our new strategy will help PET equip more prisoners with the tools to transform their lives - creating better futures for our learners, their families and their communities.

Thank you for your support.

Alexandra Marks

Alexandra Marks (Chair) and

Rod Clark

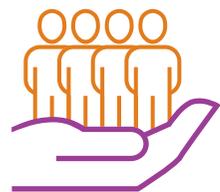
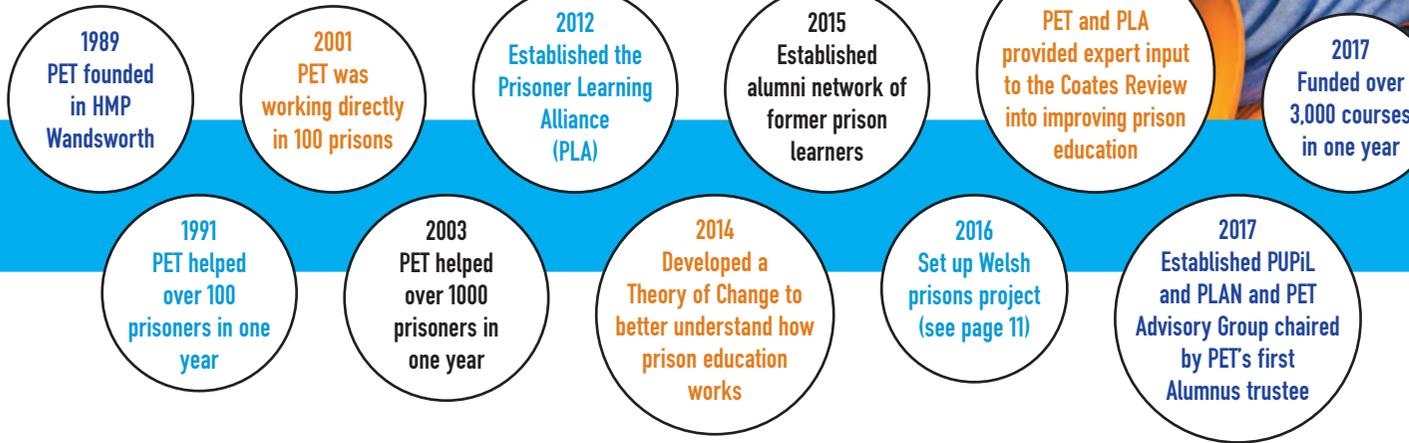
Rod Clark (Chief Executive)
Prisoners' Education Trust



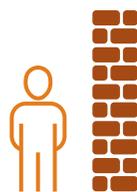
Need & Impact

Education is the engine of rehabilitation.

It provides people in prison with skills, qualifications and attributes that will help them unlock their potential and access employment after release. In prisons that are increasingly challenging places to live, education can provide a vital lifeline, offering hope and purpose and improving wellbeing. Accessing education has been proven to reduce re-offending; making our society safer and more productive.



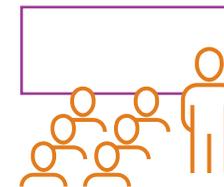
24% of prisoners have been in the care system (compared to 2% of general population)



42% of adult prisoners have been permanently excluded from school



Nearly one third of prisoners self-identified as having a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD)



46% prisoners are at a primary school level of English and Maths



60% of prisoners leave prison without an identified employment or education or training outcome.*

Need

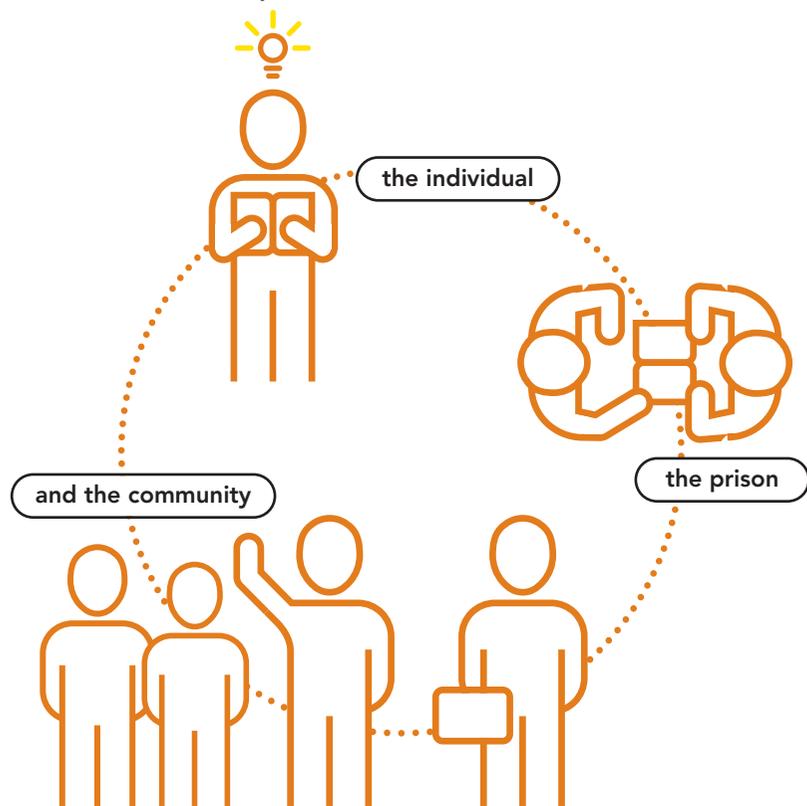
*Unlocking Potential, Sally Coates

Impact

Those who are funded by **PET** are 25% less likely to reoffend after release compared to a matched control group. That's a huge return from a course that costs on average £250.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/justice-data-lab-pilot-statistics

Education has many benefits for:



For more information go to:
<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/theory-of-change>



“ I loved the experience of distance learning. It made me feel like I wasn't in prison anymore. You know how sometimes you walk into a library and you feel a change of atmosphere? It's almost like that in your own cell. Suddenly you're interested, you're engaged, you're using your brain, you're talking to a tutor. All of those things are extremely positive and self motivating. It transforms you.”

BEN – MECHANIC AND FORMER PRISONER.

Vision, Mission and Values

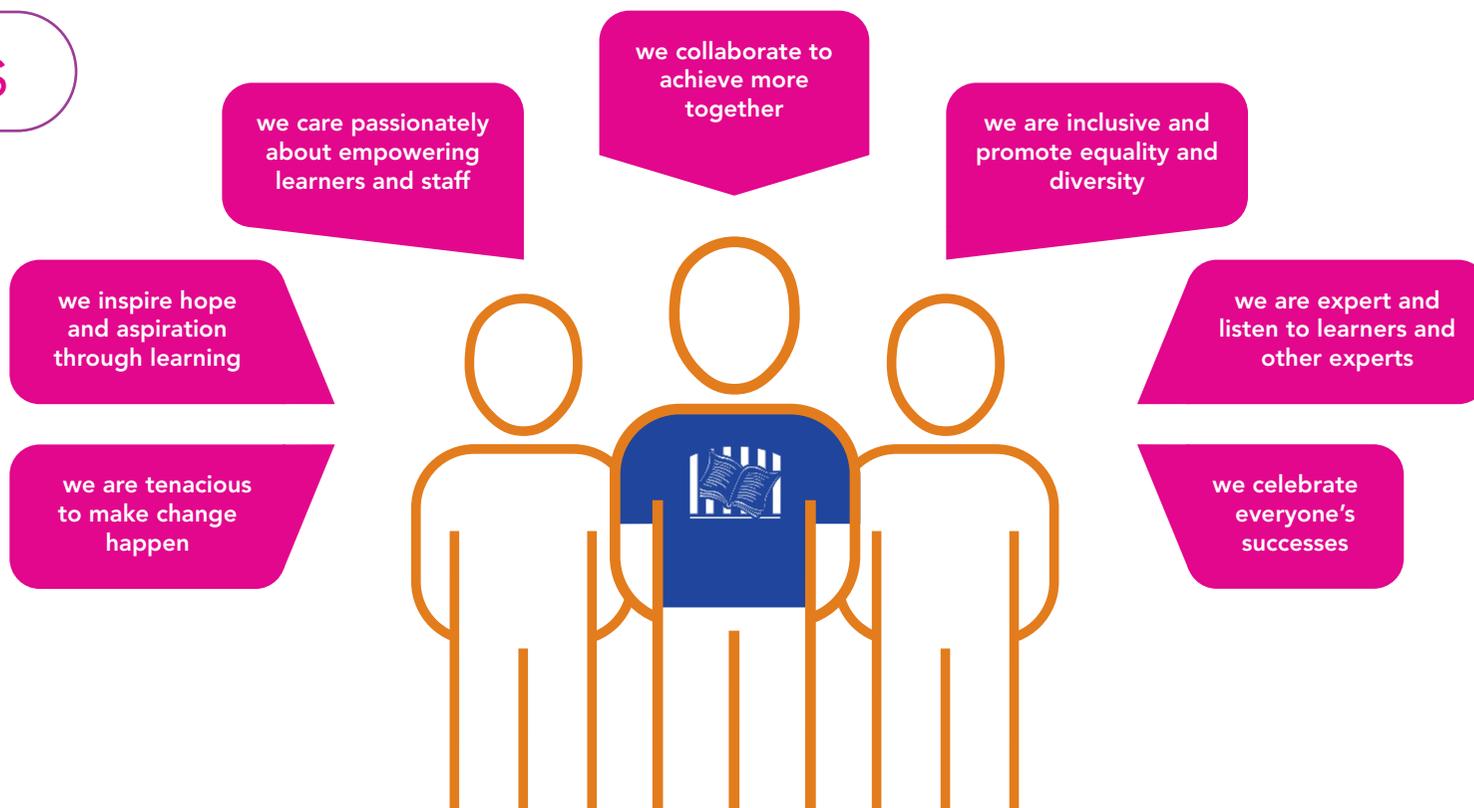
Our Vision

Prisoners' lives transformed through learning

Our Mission

Every prisoner a learner, every prison a place to learn

Our Values



We inspire

Fundamental to our beliefs and our practice is that learning is a vital way for people to build hope and aspiration towards a fulfilling future as they return to our communities. We encourage and support our learners to aspire to Higher Education both in custody and after release through the courses we provide and through our collaborative work with universities. We share the stories of our learners and alumni to inspire others to invest in prison education.

We care

Releasing human potential is central to what PET is about. That means enabling prisoners, as well as our own staff and volunteers, to realise their own learning ambitions and their own future hopes. We care what our learners and partners think and are active in working together with them to design, review and improve our services. We care about our team and support them through difficult times.

We collaborate

There are so many excellent organisations and people working in the prison education sector, from large providers of mainstream prison education, to small local charities, to individual prison teachers. PET believes that there is a need for much greater collaboration, coordination and communication to make the changes we all want to see. We commit to increasing collaboration into 2020 by continuing to develop the PLA, while building the PLAN (Prisoner Learning Academic Network) and PUPiL (Prison University Partnerships in Learning) networks. We will continue to collaborate with our existing partners, particularly with our most important stakeholders - our learners. We will also explore opportunities to form new working partnerships, especially with those working in the digital learning sphere.

We are tenacious

Prisons operate under mounting pressures and challenges concerning safety, overcrowding and understaffing. These environments are difficult places for learning and innovation to thrive. At PET, we keep striving to remove the obstacles in the way of prisoner learners, and work against the odds to find ways to give hope and opportunities. We know that prison reform is not always a popular political or public issue, and therefore we will continue to work imaginatively to influence policy and public opinion, never giving up on advocating for positive change.

We are expert

To ensure PET states the most powerful case for prison education and promotes the very best practice, we must speak with real authority based on a profound understanding of how prison education works and why. We commit to build our understanding of the need for, and impact of, education through robust research that is learner-informed. We will continue to share our expertise, while also learning from other experts – particularly those with lived experience, and we will support new research in the wider academic community, particularly through our PLAN network.

We celebrate

At PET, we know it is people themselves who can help transform someone else's life. We rejoice in the success of our learners, our partners and our team, and will continue to recognise and celebrate learners, peer mentors, prison staff and others who promote learning communities in our prisons, in particular through the PLA Awards. We will shine a light on these, often unrecognised, individuals and encourage others to follow suit. We will continue to celebrate our team's professional and personal achievements.

We are inclusive

PET values and celebrates everyone's contributions and sees diversity as a strength and asset. Prisons disproportionately hold people from ethnic minorities, care leavers, foreign nationals and people with mental health issues and learning difficulties. Custody can be particularly difficult and challenging for children, for women, for elderly people, for people who are not heterosexual and people who are transgender. It is essential therefore that PET works to see beyond society's labels, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to fulfill their potential. People with criminal convictions face multiple barriers in realising their aspirations, and PET will continue to work to promote and value the strengths and skills they can offer; to remove barriers to education and employment, and to reduce discrimination. We are committed to reviewing and improving our own policies and practices in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion for our learners, partners and team. We will monitor our progress to ensure that we are doing everything possible to involve and include, in particular, those whose voices and experiences often go unheard.

Changing Prisons

The prison system today faces unprecedented strain.

Many prisons are both understaffed and overcrowded, facing grave issues concerning violence, self-harm and drug use.

All this has a negative impact on prisoners' opportunities to access education and other purposeful activities. Classrooms and libraries are too often left empty; and dedicated, inspiring staff and mentors are unable to teach and support.

This interrupts the power of education: education that equips people to make positive changes, and can turn prisons themselves into places of meaningful reform - improving safety and reducing violence by creating purpose, opportunity and new positive identities.



Trudy Sketchley, Prison Officer and PLA Winner, HMP Swaleside.

“Do we want warehouses for the incorrigible, or greenhouses for the reformed? At the moment, we are looking at the former. But the latter is possible and within reach.”

RICHARD BRANSON

Changes to Education

In her landmark review **Unlocking Potential (2016)**, Dame Sally Coates called for learning to be placed “at the heart” of the prison system – by giving governors greater power over education and more responsibility for each prisoner's progress; recruiting new graduates and increasing training for existing staff; and opening up the use of technology. The government accepted Dame Sally's recommendations in full, and they now form the basis of forthcoming changes to prison education.

Our Chief Executive, Rod Clark, sat on Dame Sally's expert panel. Eighty-percent of our recommendations, as part of the PLA, were included in her final report. PET is therefore fully supportive of her conclusions and of the government's move to implement them. However, changes to the prison education landscape - particularly to how governors control and commission education – could in turn alter PET's position as a service provider and expert advocate of change.

Changing Prisons

PET will rise to the challenges of this new environment, by adopting:

A regional outlook

As governors act more autonomously, we will work more closely with individual prisons, staff and governors. We will build on the lessons already learned from working closely with individual prisons through our Welsh Prisons Project to understand the unique challenges, risks and opportunities of each region and institution, and adapt what we offer accordingly.

And -

A digital approach

We will embrace the benefits that advancing technology offers our learners. We will engage constructively and actively with those working to bring about digitalisation of the prison estate and we will share the advantages of giving prisoners appropriate access to technology. We will develop new digital ways of working so that our processes are more efficient, and prepared to meet the future digital capabilities of prisons.

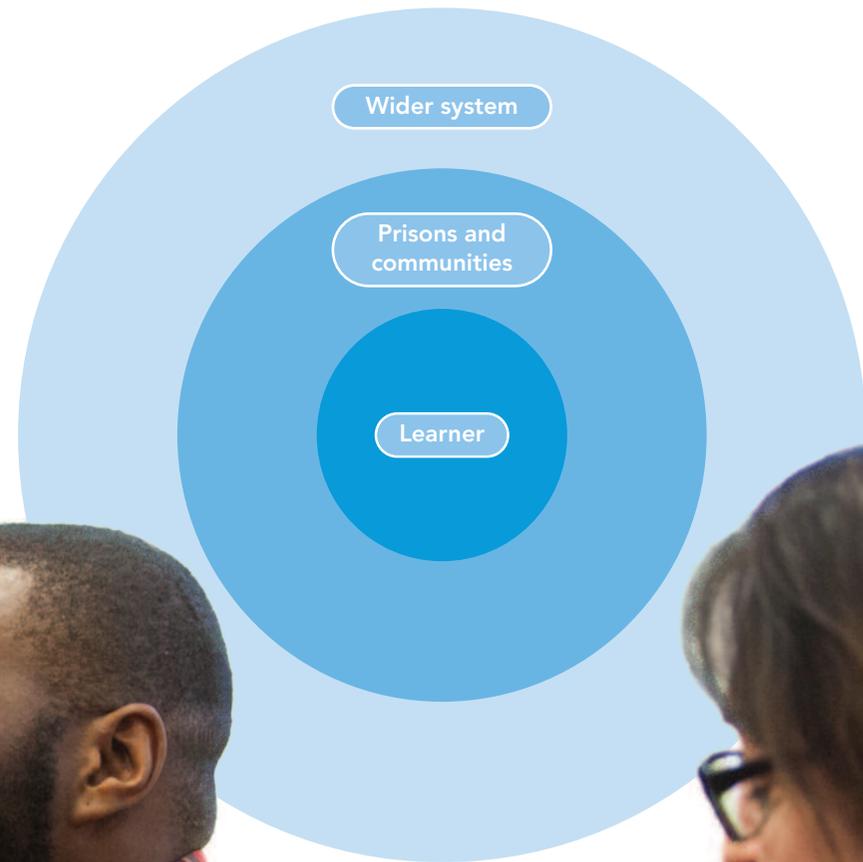
Spheres of influence

We will achieve the 2018-2020 strategy by working closely for, and with, three groups: learners, prisons and the wider sector.

Learners: ensuring their needs and their voices are that the heart of everything we do

Prisons: building a better understanding of the unique environment and population of each prison by working closely with prison and education staff

Wider sector: working even more closely with a wider range of stakeholders, including central government, the general public, policy makers, academia, the voluntary sector and others



Alumnus and social entrepreneur Bobby Kasanga, with Russ Trent, governor of HMP Berwyn and Maria Navarro, Ofsted at the 2017 PLA Conference.



Spheres of influence



Learner at the centre

In 2017 we funded approximately 3000 prisoners to study distance learning courses or access arts/hobbies materials. We also provided 938 advice sessions to ensure prisoners studied the best course to meet their specific goals and aspirations.

The expertise and experience of prisoners and ex-prisoners have helped us frame research and policy work, and have helped shaped PET's processes. Former learners help us to better meet the needs and aspirations of future learners, and they amplify the messages that we share with other service users, the criminal justice sector and the wider public.

From 2018 to 2020 we will:

- Continue to support individual prison learners to follow courses of education that make a meaningful difference to their lives
- Maintain and develop our high-quality advice and guidance service to ensure prison learners choose to study the best course available to them
- Continue to work with partner organisations to increase the variety and availability of courses by developing digital channels of communication and access to courses aligned with the digitalisation of the prison estate
- Support understanding of prisoner education through our own research, including: a PhD student studying learning communities; research in collaboration with government statisticians that will examine impact of distance learning on employment, as well as seek other opportunities to understand the wider impact of the help we provide, for example in mental wellbeing
- Develop our understanding of co-production and learner voice and promote their use across the sector
- Continue to develop an effective alumni network of ex-prisoners to ensure the expert informed voice of the prison learner is heard, and consulted when formulating PET strategies, policies and service development
- Continue to bring the experience and ideas of our beneficiaries directly to PET's Board through a Trustee with personal experience of education in prison, and through the advisory group of PET alumni

Learner

“They say being an entrepreneur is being a doer not a dreamer, but my dream started as a young boy in a prison cell, being given a second chance.”

JAVED, 23, ENTREPRENEUR
AND ALUMNUS

Patrick's story

Patrick was released on life licence in 2015, after serving 15 years in prison. Having struggled to read and write at the time he began his sentence, he was later funded by PET to begin an Open University degree. Patrick is now employed as a shop manager, and also sits on the steering group of a Learner Voice research panel set up by PET and education provider Novus.

I first went into a classroom reluctantly, when the prison ran a regime that ensured each inmate spent half a day at education. I complied in silent disgust, having so many negative memories of being bullied and constantly being made to feel stupid. At the age of 37 I still believed, deeply, that I was.

In the classroom I sat with my back to the wall and made no eye contact. I was on full alert and ready to attack the first person that reinforced that negative feeling inside of me.

It was a stand-in teacher who asked me to write a story about a good memory I had from the past. To my surprise I found I enjoyed myself.

I completed my GCSEs in the next year or so and won an award for 'Best Learner'. I loved learning and read everything I could get my hands and eyes on.

The next huge educational experience I had was being part of setting up a Student Council at HMP Wymott. I was voted Chairman by my peers, which was a huge shock to me but an opportunity I relished. This became the most exciting thing I had ever participated in in a learning environment. We, the learners, were given a voice in what we enjoyed and what worked for us.

I am a huge believer in learner voice. To feel that you are being listened to, and that your words can change the experience for you and those around you, can only be constructive. As a prisoner all your decisions are taken away, and this may be the only decision that an inmate gets to make – it was for me. This is where prison education and the prison system differ. Education is about freedom, free will and free speech. The prison system is too often about the opposite.

“ In *Of Mice and Men* I learnt about the victim and how our actions had an impact on other people. In *Jude the Obscure*, I learnt to love and grieve at the same time.”

Inspired by this experience, I decided to take the biggest step on my educational path. Through PET, I applied to start an OU degree. Now don't underestimate this – for me, who could not spell 'cat' or 'dog' at the age of 13, this was the scariest thing I had ever challenged myself to do, even more so than standing in front of a judge.

I attribute ALL my rehabilitation to education. In my reading of *Othello*, I learnt about empathy. In *Of Mice and Men* I learnt about the victim and how our actions had an impact on other people. In *Jude the Obscure*, I learnt to love and grieve at the same time.

That is how important education is in prison and how giving someone a voice can seep into his soul and have an impact on how he goes forward in life and contributes in a proactive manner and becomes a valid member of society.

My future life is as far apart from my past offending life as it could be - I have dreams and aspirations that excite me fully. Work and more studying lay ahead, and so does a fruitful and offence-free life.

I have reached this moment because a teacher years before had given me the freedom to write a story from my own mind and emotion and had then opened in me a willingness to change.

I spent most of my life in ignorance but once I became educated, I lost my anger and instead of hurting people, I wanted to help them. I simply became civilised.

Prisons and communities



Our research, the lessons we have taken from the Welsh Prison Project and the insight we gain by listening to our alumni means that PET is uniquely positioned to help coordinate education service provision in prisons and the wider community, and to deliver effective learning environments for those in prison, those leaving prison and those on temporary licence.

From 2018 to 2020 we will:

- Pilot a 'localised' service model, informed by working with prison governors and education staff, who will help us identify and meet educational needs
- Encourage prisoner engagement and educational progression by supporting prison staff, learners and peer mentors to create learning communities
- Develop the PLA's Theory of Change further to research improvements in prison education and the beneficial impact of creating learning communities
- Communicate with service providers in prison and the wider community to deliver an integrated service to support learners in prison, on temporary licence and upon their release
- Develop our understanding of how to measure and promote a 'learning culture' through further work on our survey tool to help prisons become aspirational, engaging, safe, empowering places that change lives

“ We have created a positive work culture with a real cross-section of people from all different backgrounds and beliefs. We have had workers being taught English and Maths, all in the confines of a prison recycling yard.”

**RONNIE SPENCE, OUTSTANDING OFFICER – PLA AWARDS,
HMP NORTHUMBERLAND**

Prisons and
communities

Teresa's story

Teresa Rumbelow is the Further Education Coordinator at HMP Parc, where she has worked for 10 years. She has been a key partner in our Welsh Prisons Project, in which we've given more 'wrap around' support for distance learners. Thanks in part to the commitment of people like Teresa, this pilot project has now been incorporated into PET's main way of working.

Friends and family constantly ask what is it like working in prison and I usually answer that no two days are the same - perhaps that's why I enjoy the job. The hours are long, but the days go quickly. I also tell them that there is so much job satisfaction, for example, where in any educational environment do you experience an individual receiving his resources/books with a huge grin on his face? I think to myself 'Do they realise how much work they will be doing?', to the realisation that yes they do - and this is what is making them happy! They are gaining a purpose to their life to enable them to provide for their family and more importantly raise their own self-esteem and respect.

I am very passionate and enthusiastic about distance learning - it has such a huge impact on the learners. It is a unique combination of flexibility and support that makes it such a successful way to learn. Learners are able to choose their subject area, when to begin their education and set their own pace of study based on time, academic prowess and level of commitment. Those completing these feel less isolated and less lonely in this challenging environment.

I have been working with PET's Welsh team since the beginning of the project, and sit on the steering group. Over the time PET has been working in Parc, we've seen a rise in the number of men applying for distance learning courses. PET has also produced learning packs, containing dictionaries, stationery and other informative documents, which the learners found very useful.

I was astounded and flabbergasted when I won a Prisoner Learning Alliance award last year, thanks to some of my learners nominating me. I didn't think I was really worthy of this honour, as I believe it is the learners themselves that should be awarded. I am constantly amazed and astonished by the levels of achievement and enthusiasm they are able to accomplish, especially in light of the barriers they experience. No one really knows what they can achieve until they try - very often people just need a little encouragement to believe in themselves and to realise they have a greater potential within.

“ I am very passionate and enthusiastic about distance learning – it has such a huge impact on the learners. It is a unique combination of flexibility and support that makes it such a successful way to learn.”

F/H EDUCATION
MENTOR

Wider system



Aspirational and effective prison education is only possible if supported by a wide range of stakeholders including central government, the general public, policy makers, academia and others. PET has already achieved major policy changes, notably working as part of the PLA to help shape Dame Sally Coates' review of prison education, which was accepted in full by the government.

From 2018 to 2020 we will:

- Work collaboratively across the sector to influence and shape policy and practice within the prison system and education sector
- Continue to engage with opinion formers and policymakers to make the case for prison education in general and distance learning in particular; and to promote the benefits of digital learning
- Support the case for continuing reform of the prison system in Parliament and more widely, in line with the PLA's Smart Rehabilitation blueprint for prison education that is outcome-focused, joined-up and value-driven
- Develop our understanding of the needs of our learners, in particular young people, young adults, women and BAME prisoners, recognising their specific needs and ensuring their voices are heard in shaping learning opportunities and policy
- Continue to support and develop the PLA, which is committed to improving prison education and engaging constructively with policy makers
- Develop the PLAN academic network to ensure effective feedback between practice, research and policy
- Work to build a network of Prison University Partnerships in Learning (PUPiL) to help educational institutions and prisons come together and provide opportunities for aspirational learning in custody and after release
- Continue to develop our expertise in international good practice and research through our links to the European Prison Education Association (EPEA) and other networks

Wider system

“The purpose of education in prisons is to give individuals the skills they need to unlock their potential, gain employment and become assets to their communities. It should also build social capital and improve the wellbeing of prisoners during their sentences and once released.”

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, 2017

Jermaine's story

Jermaine went to prison at 19. He gained a degree inside and is now setting up his own social enterprise targeting social exclusion in the community in which he grew up.

At school I was always told I would never amount to anything. From aged 12 I was on the road and 13 I was expelled. When I got to prison aged 19 I could barely read or write. Initially I did a course just to please people in authority – it was just doing the dance, but as I realised that my capacity was greater than I'd thought, my self-esteem and ambitions grew.

When I applied for my first distance-learning course through Prisoners' Education Trust I actually thought I would be told 'no' because of where I was from, but I got a positive response. The positive response led to ripple-effect - PET invested in my self-esteem, aspirations and momentum. I found a work ethic I'd never had in my life. It's been a gateway to where I am now.

My jobs were always in education. I was conscious that education was the lowest paid job but also that it had the most prospects. My cell wasn't a cell, not for one minute – it was an office. I worked until 2'o clock in the morning, got up at 7 o'clock and started working again, went to the gym in between. I did so many courses over the years: business studies, Spanish, bookkeeping, sports psychology, music technology, history, fine arts, to an Open University degree in criminology... I never slept!

“ The positive response led to ripple-effect - PET invested in my self-esteem, aspirations and momentum. It's been a gateway to where I am now.”

Outside academia, I focused my attention on a concept that would explore how social deprivation contributes to incarceration. My concept takes two opposing groups in the social ladder – the fortunate versus deprived. It puts them on level playing field, asking who is more suited for positions at the top of the social hierarchy, and what would happen if the deprived beat the more fortunate? People would start to believe in themselves and their opportunities and prospects.

Since being released I've spoken about it on numerous occasions – to Parliament, the Ministry of Justice, in round-table debates, to the Dalai Lama. I've worked with my local council to develop how it could apply to schools where there is gang rivalry. I'm currently working on a television series with Channel 4 which explores my understanding of the systemic trappings that deprive people like me from opportunity.

Everyone's been totally hospitable. I'm starting to be supported now; I'm being accepted.

I believe there are no exceptional human beings; it's just finding your genius. I believe obsession and drive has the ability to override my past and that's what I'm doing with my freedom. You have to do it with your whole being and believe in the impossible. And I believe that hard work is the bridge between reality and the impossible.



English class at HMP Bronzefield.

Realising our strategy

Robust foundations

PET can only achieve its goals if we have a healthy and dependable income with which to operate, and rigorous, compliant systems and processes to ensure we work effectively.

To ensure this continues, we will:

- Aim to grow our charitable and other income while also maintaining the highest standards of fundraising practice and donor data management, and responding to changes in fundraising regulation
- Maintain high standards of governance with regular reviews of Board membership and performance; including ensuring a high quality of performance reports and other information to the Board and active reviews of risks
- Continue to develop our policies as they affect our work, for example safeguarding beneficiaries and staff
- Continue to develop methods for listening to staff and involving them in improving and shaping our working practices, providing regular and effective supervision, celebrating successes and promoting opportunities for training and development including paid volunteering days
- Recruit staff using a combination of knowledge, skills and values-based competencies
- Maintain rigorous and robust processes to protect the resources of PET and to maintain the security of information we hold about prisoners and others
- Review our working practices to ensure that they are efficient and offer good value for money to our funders and our beneficiaries.

Measuring success

Achieving our strategy will depend on effectively measuring our progress against annual plans and targets, obtaining both internal and external feedback on the progress we make and managing the risks that might jeopardise our success.

We will use this strategy as the basis for setting the annual business plans and targets in relation to every element of the strategy. Our Board of Trustees will hold the senior staff team to account for how they perform against these plans and against the standards set by the Charity Commission, Companies House, the Fundraising Regulator and others. Our audited annual report and accounts will also provide annual assurance on our progress and performance.

“ What would I say to people in prison now? Distance learning will at times be hard and it will need your determination and self motivation to succeed, but my friend it’s the best thing you can do, if for nothing else than to prove to yourself that you can be more than you are.”

JAYNE, 45, CHARITY WORKER AND ALUMNA

Realising our strategy

“ I came to prison in 2005 having committed serious violent crimes. I was 40 years old, a drug user with no insight into my offending, no expectations about my future and without any qualifications at all. I had no verifiable skills, low self-esteem and I used violence to make myself feel better.

After around a year in prison, I decided that life couldn't just be about drugs so I looked around for something else to replace it. I found education and at 40 years old I began learning how to learn.

Having now done a degree, and about to be released to open conditions, I don't think I'll ever stop studying and I'm certain that I'll never stop learning. I would very much like to tell you that I'm leaving prison as a new man, a man who knows better, a man who recognises his own issues and his weaknesses and has good strategies in place to manage them. I am as dedicated to living a peaceful, decent and crime-free life as I was to starting my education all those years ago.

Thank you for helping me to be a better man. I don't know what my life would have been without education.

LEE, BSC HONS, HMP DARTMOOR



This strategy has been developed over the course of 18 months as we consulted widely with our alumni, staff, Trustees and other stakeholders. We have used creative methods to really understand what PET means to our learners and others, and what we could improve. This strategy is also underpinned both by criminological and educational theories, as well as research conducted by PET and others, and current policy.

If you would like to help us realise our strategy, please contact us using the details overleaf.

Staff, volunteers, trustees and alumni at our Summer Party 2017.





Prisoners'
Education
Trust

Prisoners' Education Trust Strategy 2018 – 2020

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