



**Annual Report For
January to December 2022
Presented at the
Annual General Meeting held remotely via zoom
on
10th May 2023 @6.30pm**

I am delighted to present the sixth Annual Report for the Bucks Association for the Care of Offenders (BACO).

On behalf of the Directors/Trustees, (Executive Committee) I would like to thank all our members for their continuous support and generosity. Without them we would not be able to help the men serving sentences in the four prisons in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes nor the male and female ex-offenders we help whilst rebuilding their lives in the county. Increasingly we are working with young people at risk of committing crime by working with the County's and Milton Keynes Youth Offending Teams.

President

The Countess Howe, Lord-Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire

Patron

The Bishop of Buckingham, Rt. Rev'd Dr Alan Wilson

Directors/Trustees (Executive Committee)

My sincere thanks to the Committee who give their time and expertise diligently and generously.

Joe Barclay	Governance
Caroline Donald	Membership Secretary
Ruth Farwell	Education and Training Lead and Prisoner Support Volunteer (PSV) HMP Grendon
Fiona Paine	Prisoner Support Volunteer (PSV) HMP Springhill
Roz Rossington	Grants Administrator and lead Probation and Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service and Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team (YOT)
Caroline Serjeant	Treasurer
Camilla Soames	Chair and Prisoner Support Volunteer (PSV) HMP/YOI, Aylesbury/Fund Raising Support

Volunteer

Andrew Muir Prisoner Support Volunteer (PSV) HMP Woodhill

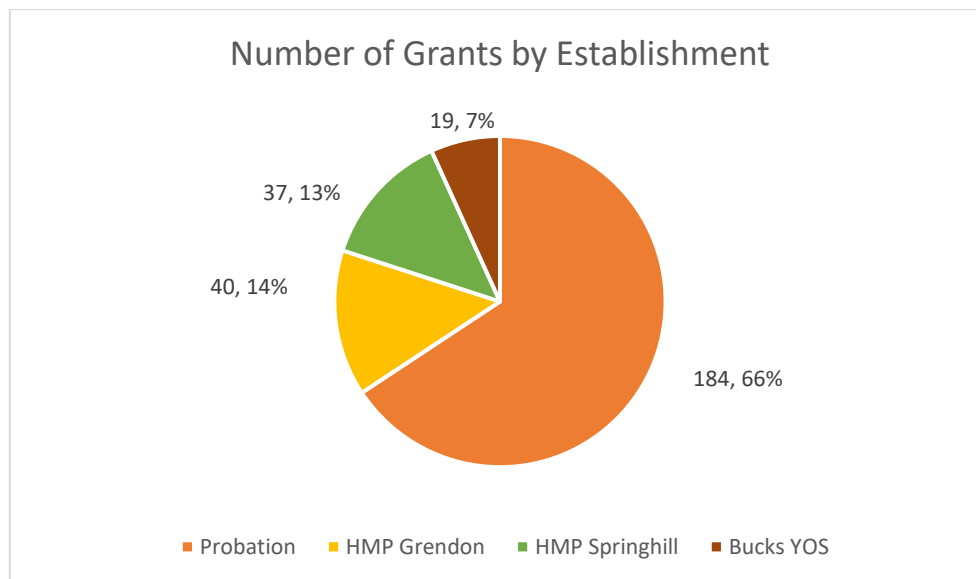
Finances

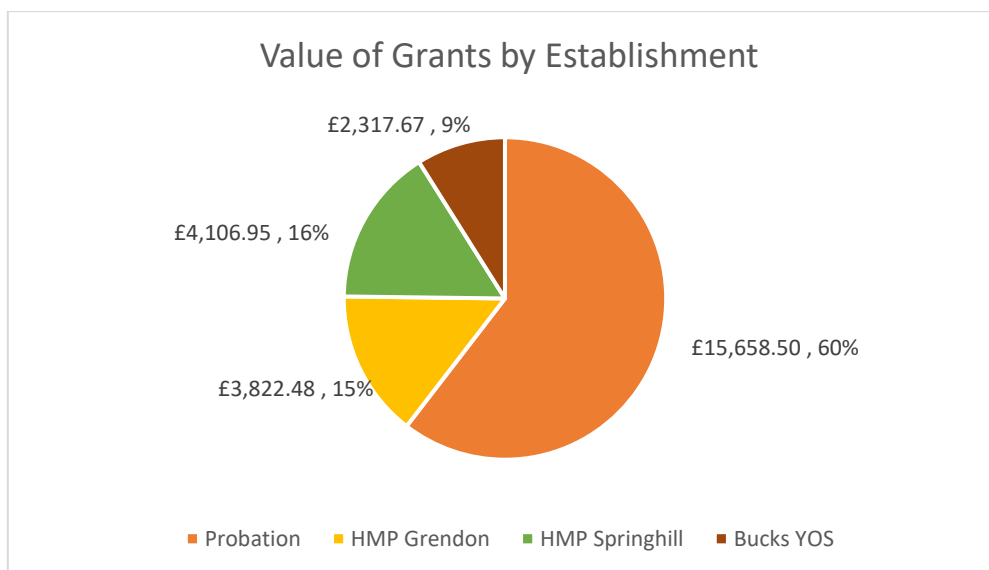
Our fund-raising was much stronger in 2022. We raised a total of £38,038, which was over £21,000 more than we raised in the previous year. Thanks go to all who made this strong performance possible. In 2021 our expenditure was £13,000 more than our income, but that shortfall was reversed in 2022 when our total expenditure of £25,039 was less than our income. As a consequence, we have been able to smooth out the impacts of covid across the two years and we carry forward funds of £42,883 which gives us a prudent level of reserves which as we learnt in 2021 can sometimes be necessary. In short BACO is healthy from a financial point of view.

Our work

Grants – Roz Rossington

In 2022 BACO made 280 grants totalling £25,905 - an average of approximately £92.52 per grant. The amount of the average grant has increased by 4.6% reflecting the rising costs that we have all faced in recent months and the fact that we have had to increase the level of grants we make for clothing and household essentials.





Probation refers to National Probation Service (offices in Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Milton Keynes). Bucks YOS is Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service. The numbers refer to the number and value of GROSS grants made during 2022 which amounted to £25,905.60. The accounts reflect the grants made, net of money refunded during the year i.e.£20,157.

National Probation Service (NPS)– Roz Rossington

60% of grants (66% by number) made in 2022 were to individuals released at the end of their custodial sentence or being supervised whilst completing a non-custodial sentence in Buckinghamshire (including Milton Keynes) and who are working with the National Probation Service. After the recent rationalisation of the probation service the teams have settled down and seem to be working well after a long period of upheaval.

2022 saw an end to the disruption of the pandemic but brought its own challenges particularly in the ongoing cost of living crisis. For the first time we have been approached for support in meeting utility bills to keep supplies connected, particularly in the winter months. In the autumn the Trustees also agreed to increase the level of grants which we make for people to buy clothing, trainers and household basics such as bedding, towels and crockery which had been similar for the past 5 years to reflect in part the rapid increase in consumer price index.

We have continued to provide grants to support individuals to improve their skills and secure permanent employment which is known to be a critical part of an ex-offenders return to society. This can be by through: training and qualifications e.g., basic tablet to complete online training, test and card fees for CSCS qualification to allow work on construction sites; providing smart clothing for interviews or a work environment; provision of tools/equipment for a specific role; help with travel e.g., second hand bicycle, bus or train pass.

Other categories where we have provided support include basic clothing and trainers, identity documentation (vital to access services/housing/benefits) and basic mobile phone to allow communication with support services and probation.

Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service – Roz Rossington

We have continued to build our relationship with the team supporting young people under the age of 18. As life for those in education returned to normal the need for IT support has reduced, but in its place there is the challenge for parents/guardians, already struggling with rising costs in every part of life, of buying uniform and school supplies. If you are starting a new school it is vital to blend in so arriving with the right clothes, stationary and a bag can really help. We have also provided for involvement in several different activities to aid settling into a new area, making friends and encouraging positive life choices. These types of grants also improve the level of engagement with the service and are used as a means of incentivising individuals to continue working with “establishment” services when there is little or no trust in place.

For a redacted list of all grants made in 2022, please ask Roz grants@baco.org.uk.

‘R collected his bicycle this afternoon almost bringing members of staff to tears. He stated “I’ve never had a new bike before. No one has ever done something like this for me”. Hopefully this has instilled some positivity into him that there are positive influences in society that can help him and will aid his future decisions.”

Probation officer – NPS

Probation refers to National Probation Service and Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company and Bucks YOS is Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service

In Prisons

Buckinghamshire has four prisons. Our presence in the prisons is dependent on maintaining good working relationships between BACO Prisoner Support Volunteers (PSV) and the prison staff. We appreciate the privilege we have, as a charity, to be given access to our prisons and the trust our volunteers have earned to permit them to 'draw keys' and go about their work in the prison unchaperoned. In two of the establishments our PSV's attend the monthly QIG (Quality Improvement Group) meetings. It's an opportunity to learn from the Governors and staff what initiatives to reduce re-offending are in place and who is leading them. Other charities working in criminal justice attend and it is an ideal opportunity to discuss ways of working together and 'advertising' what BACO does.

Prisons across the country have been slow to come out of pandemic regimes. Lack of staff and retention of staff continues to be problematic with men spending too long in their cells without regular access to activities, education and employment.

You will note that BACO is yet to establish its role in HMP Woodhill. We are addressing this and hope to be able to report on having made progress by next years AGM.

To evaluate our work we rely heavily on testimonials from all our service users as well as prison and probation staff. Many testimonials can be found on the home page of our website www.baco.org.uk. In conversation with the people who receive our grants they are often surprised to learn that much of our funding comes from our members who believe that their financial support can help the men turn their lives around and break the cycle of re-offending. To know that a stranger cares is a powerful force for good.

HMP Grendon

Prisoner Support Volunteer - Ruth Farwell

It was with much pleasure that, after over two years of processing applications remotely, BACO was able to make visits again to Grendon, meeting and chatting with the men generally and about their applications. It is easier face to face to build the good working relationships with the BACO reps and staff on each wing and on which BACO depends. We are grateful to all at Grendon who make this possible.

The Autumn of 2022 saw the return of the Wing Socials and BACO members responded positively to the opportunity to meet with the men and to find out about the regime at Grendon. For one of the wings this involved having tasters of the art, music and drama therapies as well as hearing from the men how these benefit them. It really is a privilege to be able to see and hear first-hand the therapy work at Grendon and members are always keen to take up the opportunity. Regrettably spaces are limited and there are always more members wanting to attend than is permitted.

The men are most appreciative of the support which BACO provides and with that the knowledge that there are people in the local community who care about them and their future. Feedback on the purchases enabled by the grants is always positive for example:

“I am writing to thank you and show my appreciation to all the donors who helped me better myself.... the language books and CDs which have been such a big help with managing my own mental health and I honed a new skill learning a language...”

“...thanks to you and BACO for your generous help in giving me the funds to buy clothing and trainers. This will lift my spirits up as I have struggled for so long knowing my clothes were getting old and not having the support outside”

Education and training – Ruth Farwell

We were delighted that the now High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Dame Ann Limb, introduced BACO to the City & Guilds Foundation in early 2022. By the Autumn BACO was in a position to put independently a proposal to City & Guilds to contribute funds to a pilot project which sees BACO partnering with HMP/YOI Aylesbury, City & Guilds and Cell Workout. LJ Flanders, founder of Cell Workout, had the idea of developing physical exercise programmes which require minimal equipment and space while serving a sentence in HMP Pentonville. On release he published the Cell Workout book which remains popular among prisoners and now runs exercise programmes in the community and in prisons, emphasising the importance of physical exercise to mental health and well-being. The BACO project to be launched in 2023 aims:

- to arrange for the Cell Workout programmes to lead to a qualification for those who participate on them,
- to use these programmes to engage the men at Aylesbury,
- to enable them to act as Cell Workout reps, as role models to other prisoners,
- to facilitate progression to employment in the fitness industry on release.

In late 2021 BACO awarded a further grant of £3,000 to the Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) to fund specifically applications for distance learning courses from men at HMP/YOI Aylesbury. The grant has enabled six prisoners to access a range of academic and vocational courses. Commonly cited motivations for wanting to study a distance learning course included: improving employment prospects, managing mental health, and spending time in prison constructively while preparing for life after release. The courses which the six studied were:

- Business Goldstar Part 1 (A-level equivalent; three students)
- Business Start-Up
- NEBOSH Level 2 Award in Health and Safety at Work
- Principles of Customer Service

Another grant of £3,000 was made to PET in November 2022.

HMP Springhill

Prisoner Support Volunteer - Fiona Paine

In 2022 we received 61 requests for grants from the men in HMP Springhill. This was 60 less than in 2021. This is down to a variety of reasons but primarily the lingering effect of Covid. The men had less opportunity to leave the prison, reducing demand for clothing and the cost of training courses. Due to the re-categorisation of various other prisons, the turnover of prisoners into and out of HMP Springhill increased considerably, thereby reducing the pool of men who knew and understood what BACO can offer. This knowledge was not then passed on to the incoming men. The same could be said of the rapid turnover of staff too – knowledge was lost. (We have addressed this issue already for 2023).

The scope of our grants continues to follow the same pattern as previous years:

Type of Grant	Payment sent	Payment pending
Training courses and Education	5 – typically £250 max	16
Construction Skills Certification Scheme – essential for work on a building site	6 @ £36	1
Essential clothing and PPE	3 @ £90 max	4
Replacement photo ID	1 @ £12	
Trade tools	2 @ £200 max	1
Driving licences and lessons	17	4
Passport		1 Rejected

Due to my own ill health, I could not visit the prison in 2022- being able to meet and talk to the men helps promote BACO more than anything else and I very much hope to be able to do so again next year. I would like to thank fellow volunteer Andrew Muir who has kindly helped and supported me with my duties.

HMP/YOI, Aylesbury

Prisoner Support Volunteer – Camilla Soames

HMP/YOI Aylesbury is no longer a High Security Young Offenders Prison. On October 1st 2022 was re-designated a Category C, training establishment. It has space for 402 prisoners mostly aged from 21 – 40 years of age.

BACO attended the Quality Improvement Group (QIG) monthly meetings throughout the year with Ruth Farwell standing in for Camilla when needed. We continued to promote BACO to the prison population and received a few applications. It is hoped for an increase level of awareness of BACO's work amongst prisoners and staff with the Cell Work out initiative starting in 2023.

HMP Woodhill

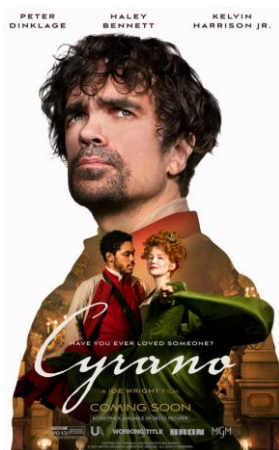
Prisoner Support Volunteer – Camilla Soames / Andrew Muir

Our thanks to our patient PSV Andrew Muir, who is key trained and ready to deliver BACO grants in HMP Woodhill. The Head of Reducing Re-offending was on extended leave in 2022 and we have yet to establish ourselves within the prison.

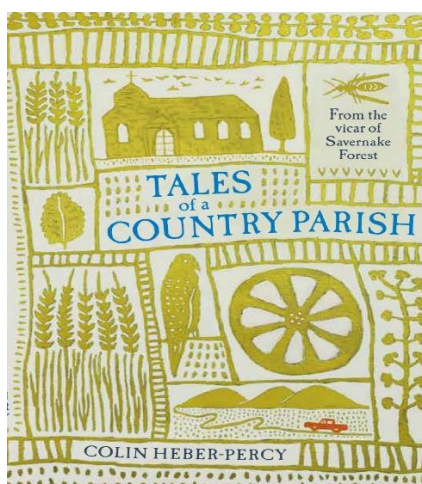
Fundraising

2022 was the first year post the pandemic when we felt secure in organising events that people would want to attend and there were no Government imposed restrictions on attendance numbers.

On January 11th Working Title Films offered us an exclusive screening of their pre-public release *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the Bernard Hall, Cuddington, our thanks to them and the Bernard Hall Cinema Club, run by volunteers who helped us raise £645.00.



On March 5th by kind invitation of Alex and Jane Bonsor the beautiful Chapel at Liscombe Park welcomed author The Rev'd Dr. Colin Heber-Percy to give a talk on his 'reflections through covid' and the event raised £1,163. Bradley Cooper also spoke about how BACO had supported him whilst serving his sentence at HMP Grendon.



Bradley's talk prompted a member of the audience to put BACO forward as a possible recipient of a share of the net proceeds from the Swanborne Endeavour held on October 23rd. A cross country obstacle race for all ages and all abilities. Our thanks to Tom Finchett and Paul Skorne for nominating BACO as recipients. BACO was Awarded £2,500.



BACO Trustee Ruth Farwell and her husband Martin receiving a cheque for £5,000 from Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley Police and Chief Constable John Campbell. This successful application to the Police Crime Commissioner Property Fund was supported by George Anson, High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 2021/2022



We are grateful to the following Trusts/Foundation/Organisations who supported us in 2022

Aldo Trust	£750
JG Ward Charitable Trust	£750
Carrington Charitable Trust	£500
Anson Trust	£3,000
EM MacAndrew Trust	£2,000
Rothschild Foundation	£5,000
Charles Hayward Foundation	£1,000
Ridgebarn Trust	£5,000
Buckingham Rotary Club	£113
Cottesloe Charity (Swanborne Endeavour)	£2,500
TVPCC Community Grant	£5,000
Heart of Bucks Community Foundation	£5,000

*TVPCC (Thames Valley Police Crime Commission)

Our members are our life-blood and we are so grateful for their support. Our sincere thanks to Annabel Briggs who donated a tree to HMP/YOI Aylesbury as part of the The Queen's Green Canopy , in memory of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. BACO President and HM Lord-Lieutenant The Countess Howe, and The High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire Debbie Brock DL attended the tree planting ceremony along with Prisoners and guests. Our thanks to the Governor and his staff and to Countess Howe who suggested at the AGM in 2021 that members might be amenable to sponsoring a tree.



The High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire and BACO member Debbie Brock DL also donated to a tree to HMP Woodhill and was part of the planting ceremony with Governor Nicola Marfleet.



We need to keep BACO breathing and alive by recruiting new members. We had some success in 2022 but need to keep working hard to recruit more. Thank you to all Members who have made generous donations above their annual subscriptions of £20.00 per annum.

We have a social media presence and can be found on Facebook, Instagram & use Just Giving as our Fund-raising platform plus we are a registered charity with the Buckinghamshire Lottery.

Partnerships

Throughout the year various members of the committees attended online training and webinars from various organisations; CLINKS, the NCJAA, Community Impact Bucks. The Trustees continue to work at maintaining BACO's profile as an effective charity operating in Buckinghamshire & MK within the voluntary organisation criminal justice sector.

Special mentions

Thank you to Henry Allmand CE of Heart of Bucks (HOB) and to his staff who continue to support BACO by allowing us to use the HOB offices as our poste restante and forward post to us FOC.

Thank you to Fizz Accounting Limited for independently examining our accounts on a pro bono basis.

Thank you to Martyn Allen and Kathryn Hobbs for Website and Administration & Social Media support.

Thank you Rose Scrope for looking after our Instagram account.

Thank you Bradley Cooper BACO's lived experience Ambassador.

Meanwhile

Thank you for taking the time to read this report and if you know of anyone who would like to support BACO by becoming a member and or making a donation please direct them to our website www.baco.org.uk or email info@baco.org.uk. Or follow us on twitter @BacoinBucks or Instagram @Baco_in_Bucks.

Camilla Soames - Chair