



BUCKS ASSOCIATION FOR THE CARE OF OFFENDERS

Registered Charity No 1186375

January 2022

## Dear BACO Members, Supporters & Friends

It gives me great pleasure to write that we held our first BACO event of this year with a screening of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, starring Peter Dinklage. Thank you to Working Title and the Cuddington Picture House who made this possible and to all those who came and supported BACO. Our 'lived experience' Ambassador Bradley Cooper kindly said a few words about his experiences of life inside and how BACO helped him before the curtain went up.



2021 continued to be a difficult year for everyone. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) directives to all prisons to follow strict guidelines to protect prisoners and staff remained in place throughout the year with those serving sentences in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes enduring twelve months of continuous regime changes: *prisons being a high-risk environment due to the high number of people living and working together, making the spread of infection more difficult to control and the risk of outbreaks more acute.* At its worst



this means prisoners locked in their cells for 23 hours and at its best some opportunities for the men to mix with each other in small groups on wings and some opportunities to attend workshops and classroom education. Only Springhill managed an extended period of normality with men able to go to work or education on ROTL (released on temporary licence). BACO Prisoner Support Volunteers were able to process

applications but were not able to visit any of the prisoners in their relevant establishments during the year. We are all hoping that things will improve during this year and that BACO Members will be invited to Grendon Wing Socials once more and other rehabilitative events to be held in HMP Springhill, HMP Woodhill & HMYOI, Aylesbury.

The success of any third sector organisation working in criminal justice is entirely reliant on the establishment of trust between the volunteer and the prison staff. It is equally important for the Wing Officer to want to engage with the organisation as it is with the Number 1 Governor. It is a credit to the BACO Prisoner Support Volunteers (PSV's) that in two of our establishments they are invited to attend the monthly staff Quality Improvement Group Meetings (QIG). During this year the attendance has been via a secure telephone dial in; fingers crossed we will soon be attending in person. It gives understanding and access to many of the staff whose cooperation is essential for delivering our service and makes us aware of the huge challenges and frustrations people face every day working in criminal justice. It also gives us the opportunity to be made aware of the rehabilitation objectives the prison is working towards and how BACO can play its part.

As of June 2021 the prison population has gone down from 2019 to approximately 80,366 (England and Wales). Last year the MOJ submitted plans to build a new prison on the HMP Springhill/Grendon site to house over 1,400 men, construction to start 2022/2023 with the aim to open the new prison in 2025. Buckinghamshire Council have objected strongly. BACO were consulted.

2021 was a very difficult year for fund-raising and we are grateful to the support we received from Trusts and Foundations and individuals. In June, Andrew and Jane Muir nominated BACO to share proceeds raised from an open gardens weekend at Wingrave with Maggie's cancer charity.



Fiona Paine is going to step-back from the fundraising role she took on in tandem with being a BACO Prisoner Support Volunteer at HMP Springhill. We thank her for all her hard work and are so pleased she is continuing to be PSV for HMP Springhill. We are on the look out for a Trust and Foundations fundraiser/bid-writer who would consider doing some pro bono work for us. Should you know of anyone who would like to give it a go please contact Milly at [info@baco.org.uk](mailto:info@baco.org.uk).

Recruiting new members is a constant pleasure and we scooped a big one in Rose Scrope. She is a mentor for key4life, a social media user and has set up our Instagram. Rose wrote an article about BACO to recognise our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and introducing our first 'lived experience' Ambassador Mr Bradley Cooper who is a chef working and living in Buckinghamshire. Her article was published in the national prison newspaper 'Inside Time' and the article can be read on BACO website under 'news' <https://www.baco.org.uk/baco-news/>. A massive thank you to Rose for her enthusiasm and for her help in recruiting younger new members.



May we also thank the Members who donate way beyond the annual membership these unsolicited gifts lift our spirits!

News will follow shortly about fundraising events we are hoping to hold this year and if the AGM on May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm will be in person or remotely. Please keep an eye on the events page on the BACO website <https://www.baco.org.uk/events/> for further updates.

If you haven't already done so we would ask you to renew your membership on the BACO website; [www.baco.org.uk](http://www.baco.org.uk) it runs January – December and costs £20. If you find yourself flush and would like to donate, then please use the Justgiving page or if you don't enjoy using a website and would prefer to pay via bacs and or set up a standing order please do so and let Caroline Donald know [membership@baco.org.uk](mailto:membership@baco.org.uk).



HMRC have tweaked their rules on Gift Aid. To ensure our records are up to date Caroline Donald will be in touch via email with all renewing members.

Our banking details:  
BACO  
Sort code: 30-90-89  
A/C 53874068

Last year BACO was able to allocate over £28,000 to prisoners, ex-offenders adjusting to life in the community and to those identified as being at risk of committing crime. Our efforts are

rewarded by receiving letters of thanks written by the successful applicants. These are published on the home page of the website.

*'Firstly I would like to thank you BACO for their help and support in granting me £65.00 for my driving licence. This funding will now give me the opportunity to be fully mobile once I am released and enable me to be in a position to seek work and or travel to and from work once I've secured it. Thank you for all your help and support. It is much appreciated.'*

## You've got to be in it to win it!

Don't forget you can support BACO and at the same time be in with a chance to win big with the Buckinghamshire Lottery! Created in 2020 by Buckinghamshire Council, Buckinghamshire Lottery empowers local good causes to raise money in a fun and effective way and enables people to support the causes they care most about. A ticket costs £1 per week with 60p going directly to BACO if you select us as your preferred charity. Prizes of up to £25,000 can be won and can be kept or donated to your preferred charity.



<https://www.buckinghamshirelottery.co.uk/support/baco>






If you shop with Amazon Smile please consider nominating BACO (registered charity no 1186375). Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases.

Many of you will know of BACO's close association with the Thames Valley Partnership. We are so impressed that Chief Executive Nikki Ross is cycling from John O'Groats to Lands End in April as her third coast to coast ride in 2021/22 to raise money for TVP. If you would like to support her please visit her GoFundMe page <https://www.gofundme.com/f/thames-valley-partnership-funding>



## Social media accounts

-  Facebook: @BucksAssociationfortheCareofOffenders
-  Instagram: baco\_in\_bucks
-  Twitter: @BACOinBucks

Wishing you and your families a very happy and healthy 2022.

Milly Soames and the Committee: Joe Barclay, Caroline Donald, Ruth Farwell, Fiona Paine, Roz Rossington and Caroline Serjeant