



Recovery From Within

16th September 2016

(Our Reflections)



- Scottish Prison Services -Recovery Walks in Prison
- 11 Prisons Expressed Interest and Willingness
- 9 Prisons took part in the Walk
- 7 Prisons were represented on the day of The Scottish Recovery Walk 2016; Falkirk

Event planning

As more prisons came on Board to take Part in the Prison Walk, each was given a Flag to decorate with their Prison Name. Those able to attend on the National Walk the next day could fly their flag behind the Alcohol and Drug Partner Areas. This year there were 30 Flags along with 9 Prison Flags.....and...in designated order.....quite an achievement.

An ambassador for SRC, and in some cases more than one attended the walks “on the inside” to lend support and show appreciation for this wonderful achievement. Visitors and Staff also attended and guest speakers.

Status - Participants

Perth – Edinburgh- Cornton Vale – Inverness – Polmont – Glenochil -Castle Huntly
Low Moss – Barlinnie

Overview of Event

In total approximately **409** Prisoners staff and visitors “Walked the Walk” in the various prisons, highlights include, a recovery village, remembrance trees, keynote speakers with a keen support from the Governors, Ministers, Chaplains, external workers and mutual aid groups, all staff.

Some Feedback and comments either from “In house” reports or verbally:-

“HMP Perth and its recovery community members are bursting to keep the journey moving on. The Walk occurred at a time of transition but the overall call is to keep the momentum going.....let's engage better with our residential staff, empower prisoners to take more control of their own recovery, strengthen our partnerships with external recovery communities and celebrate the possibility of a life better lived. “

“A bit of recovery bounce – I was able to walk with a member of prison staff on the walk on the Saturday whom we had met the previous day inside the prison. It was lovely to have made the connection, especially as he commented on how normally the prison would feel a bit separate from everything else going on, and how he didn't know many people in the outside recovery community. He now knew at least 4 people on the walk – 4 more than he would have done if we hadn't been in Polmont the day before!

It was great to meet the two young men on day release, too, on the Saturday walk.

Prison Recovery Walk 2016

It was a privilege to walk and talk with the young men and women within the prison, and inspirational to hear about their plans for the future. It was also a good opportunity for us visitors to speak about either a personal recovery or about opportunities that are growing in relation to recovery across Scotland."

"The sun shone for us and we planted a Cornelia climbing rosebush to commemorate those we have lost. I said a few words about the history of recovery month and the history of "the walk". It was a lovely afternoon. "The group was piped out by our very own piper, Residential Officer and after the walk there was a Recovery village style gathering and taster sessions for SMART Recovery which were delivered by Peer facilitators from the community, who had recently undergone their SMART training alongside prisoners and the establishment, this initiative was the first time SMART recovery had delivered training in this manner not only in the UK but also the US and Canada.

Light exercise class delivered by the PTI and a healthy smoothie for all that took part. There was an area set aside for those taking part to meet and share experience, and all took time to celebrate their recovery with a special slot being given to a retired head master, who shared his inspirational story and his own recovery journey. Lunch was then provided, with prisoners and community sharing the whole experience of the day. "

"At Barlinnie we walked round the perimeter and I spoke to a young man, who shared with me his addiction issues and his inability to "stay stopped" on the outside. It was really exciting for me but also daunting, as this is the largest prison in Scotland. It houses 1200 prisoners and the potential for future recovery walks is huge. From the officer who shared with us about his personal experience of addiction in his family to the host of peers who came and shared their experience. One in particular was so inspirational having spent half his life in Barlinnie, and is now working full time and is a trusted and respected member of his community"

"The morning walk was male and female prisoners, with representatives from SMART, A.A, ELCA , lifeline and local ADP.

The afternoon walk was male protection prisoners with representatives from SMART, lifeline and SRC.

A highlight was Smart T shirts supplied to all prisoners, also the remembrance service for those lost to recovery Roses being placed around a cross and an emotional delivery by the Chaplain.

Prison Recovery Walk 2016

International Impact

As yet none, but as this to our knowledge has never been done in any establishment in World.....watch this space.

Our Learning

The Prisons are all keen to build on the Recovery Walks and really got behind the concept.

It was suggested by Jean Watson on the day of the National Walk that all the Prison Flags be photographed together. This sadly was just too hard to organise in the Recovery Village when everyone and dispersed, however next year I will certainly make sure that all flags present on the day be photographed collectively.....can't wait.

Appreciation

A huge thank you to all. A special vote of thanks to the Prison Contacts for driving the Walk Forward, from the inside.

It really was operationally quite significant and all the other prison staff who came on board to provide the security on the day.

To all the Ambassadors who volunteered to go and show support for the Walk and all the feedback given.

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