

Lloyds Bank Foundation awards generous grant to Elizabeth Fry

Lloyds Bank Foundation have awarded £69,784 to Elizabeth Fry, which equates to three years' salary for a Housing and Link Worker. We are most grateful to them for their generosity.

The main element of the role of the Housing and Link Worker will be to work directly with residents to facilitate their successful move on from the approved premises, which will include contact with them prior to their arrival and support during and after their stay. The post holder will also be required to promote the use of Elizabeth Fry to partner organisations, through presentations and regular correspondence.

Return Elizabeth Fry to her Charity and send us your £5 notes

The current £5 note which has a portrait of Elizabeth Fry on the back is to be replaced in 2016.



We are collecting these £5 notes for our charity and would be grateful if you could donate by sending a £5 note to us at:

Elizabeth Fry Charity, 6 Coley Avenue, Reading RG1 6LQ or via <https://localgiving.com/charity/elizabethfrycharity>.

Funding for project room

A most generous donation from the Berkshire Community Foundation has enabled us to modernise the Project Room for the benefit of the residents. A wall was removed and an old office cleared to offer a larger space that will now accommodate all residents when required and a versatile space for multi-use.



In addition, we were able to strip out an old kitchen in our annexe and turn the room into a new office for the soon to be appointed Housing and Link Worker.

We are immensely grateful for all the donations that we receive for without them we would be unable to continue to improve the facilities for our residents.

'Journeys and Stories'

Elizabeth Fry and Thames Valley Partnership have worked together over a number of years to offer creative activity to residents. The new project 'Journeys and Stories' builds on 2 years of the Women at the HeArt project plus a further set of sessions funded by Reading Cultural Partnership during 2014.

'Journeys and Stories' will commence in autumn 2015 with regular sessions led by experienced artists Christine Wilkinson and Carla Conte, both familiar faces to Elizabeth Fry. Residents will have the chance to work in a variety of different art mediums and produce artwork that will be exhibited at Reading Museum during 2016. The project will also allow residents to talk about their stories and experiences which will be edited and available as sound recording alongside the visual artwork at the Museum – enabling their voices to be truly heard by the wider public.

The project also includes support for staff by offering an Action Learning Set: a unique approach to staff training, encompassing a creative approach alongside listening skills and supporting the role of key workers at the hostel.

The project is funded by Arts Council England and managed by Thames Valley Partnership.



Reading Rep partnership

Written by Tim Ford, from Reading Rep

Reading Rep is Reading's resident professional theatre. We combine high-class productions with ground-breaking education and community engagement programmes that help transform Reading and the surrounding area's cultural landscape.

As part of our commitment to community engagement we are delighted to have been working in partnership with Elizabeth Fry. Over the last few months we have been working with the residents at Elizabeth Fry delivering weekly drama classes with the aim of supporting the participants back into health, the community and employment. Each week the residents have been working with Reading Rep's professional artists exploring and developing key skills such as developing communications skills, developing confidence, developing team working skills and most importantly developing trust. It has been a pleasure to see the progress that many of the residents have made in such a short space of time and we really look forward to continuing this work late in the year when we aim to come back and create a special play with the residents for Christmas.

Visit from the High Sheriff

D M A Bertie, Esq, High Sheriff of the Royal County of Berkshire, visited Elizabeth Fry Charity on Thursday 14th May 2015.

Mr Bertie was recently appointed for his one year term of office as High Sheriff of the County. We were privileged to welcome Mr Bertie and his wife Catherine to us, early in his term of office.

The High Sheriff has a great interest in the Criminal Justice system, and as we are the only female approved Premises in the region he was very interested in our work.



Mr D M A Bertie Esq

Handbell Ringers at Elizabeth Fry



Six of the Finchampstead (Berks) Handbell Ringers entertained residents and staff with a medley of tunes on their handbells. The sound was exquisite (no church bells here) and we were invited to try out the bells at the end. The Handbell Ringers often join forces with other groups and tour the UK for everyone to hear.

Hens complement Gardening Project

We have had an addition to our Gardening Project organised by Launchpad Horticulture and Healthy Living Service: four hens called Liz, Jan, Skye and Beyoncé. They are providing the residents with lots of eggs.



Partnership with Reading Citizens Advice Bureau



As a result of a generous donation from the Rowse Family Trust, Elizabeth Fry Charity will be working in partnership with Reading Citizens Advice Bureau. There will be two strands to this work: training for staff on the welfare reform and a dedicated advisor who will work with residents to support them in the area of financial literacy. The ability to manage one's money, budget effectively and have access to financial services can greatly reduce the risk of a resident re-offending upon release and improve rehabilitation in the community. Taking steps to manage money better can improve a resident's ability to sustain accommodation, obtain lawful employment opportunities and maintain relationships with their family. There are also clear links between financial capability and psychological well-being, with research indicating that improving money management improves life satisfaction and decreases the risk of anxiety and depression. These areas are key issues for our residents and it is clear that this new partnership will benefit them in many areas of their lives and contribute to a reduction in re-offending rates.

Elizabeth Fry Charity is registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee, no. 8606716.
Registered charity no. 1152840.

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