

**Prisoners'  
Education  
Trust**

# Impact report 2025

# Foreword

As this report shows, Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) had an excellent year in 2025. We continued to support people in prison to access distance learning, strengthened and expanded what we offer, and pressed for improvements in prison education policy.

Despite ongoing challenges in the prison system – and significant cuts to the education provided by prisons – we were able to fund 1,741 courses during 2025, which was 200 more than in the previous year. We also took 1,261 calls on our Advice Line, 140 more than in 2024. This shows the importance of what we provide. Without the courses we offered, many people in prison would not have been able to access education at all.

Alongside this, we improved and expanded our services. This included making courses available digitally, enhancing our support for prison staff, and beginning an exciting new project to enable us to better support learners in the women's estate. We also used our experience and expertise to inform policy at a national level, working with parliamentarians and policymakers to improve prison education provision.

All of this was possible due to the generous support that PET receives, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to PET's work during 2025. This includes everyone who donated to us, the trusts and foundations who provide us with funding, and the many organisations that we work with and that enable us to do what we do.

Finally, I would like to congratulate all the learners who we supported during the year. Doing a distance learning course in prison can be lonely and difficult. There are many challenges to overcome. But our learners consistently inspire us all with their dedication, their commitment and with what they achieve.

I am proud of everything that PET does to provide access to education and to support people in prison to study. I hope that this report provides a snapshot that illustrates the value of the work that we do.



**Jon Collins**  
**Chief Executive**

# Highlights of the year



## January

### We joined Bluesky!

You can now keep up to date with our work by following us at [@prisonersed.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/prisonersed.bsky.social)



## February

### Omar shared his story

"This interview isn't just my story, it's a call to rewrite the sentence. Education and reading has the power to break cycles, transform lives, and create opportunities for those who need it most". [Read the interview here.](#)



## March

### Influencing the prisons agenda

We called for more investment in prison education which was featured in [The Independent](#) and in prison newspaper [Inside Time](#), as we responded to a new House of Commons report on the capacity of our prisons. [Read our blog here.](#)

## April

### Created videos for prison staff

We created new bitesize videos and printable information cards to support prison staff on the prison staff resources part of our website.

## May

### New trustees

We welcomed three new trustees, including the Director of Communications at the Bar Council, a consultant with wide-ranging experience in the justice sector, and a Team Leader at St Giles Trust. [Read about their appointments here.](#)

## June

### Our work in Wales

We submitted evidence to The Welsh Affairs Committee inquiry on the role prison education plays in effective rehabilitation; the impact of the lack of a prison for women in Wales and parity of education services in England and Wales. [Read the submission here.](#)



New trustees Sally Burnell, Jo Easton and Oluseun Sowole



## July

### Andy's story

Andy shared his story of hope, drive and recovery as part of our Summer Appeal. The appeal raised an amazing £20,127 to support more people like Andy with courses in prison. Thank you so much to everyone who kindly donated.



## August

### 50,000 educational awards!

In August we hit the milestone of funding 50,000 educational awards to people in prison since we were founded in 1989!

## September

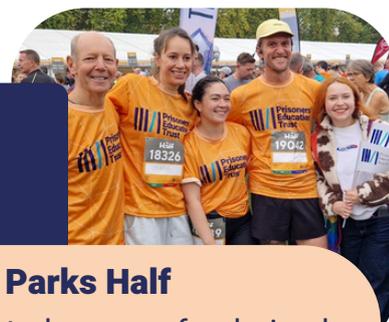
### Responding to education cuts

PET's Chief Executive Jon wrote articles in Russell Webster and FE Week on the impact of prison education cuts.

## October

### Royal Parks Half

A team of dedicated runners fundraised for PET by running the Royal Parks Half Marathon!



## November

### Helping women learners

We started a new research project looking at why women's course completion rates are lower and how we can support them to finish their studies. We will share the findings later this year.

## December

### Boosting digital learning in prisons

We published a briefing calling for a long-term strategy for digital learning in prison, as inconsistent provision threatens learning opportunities and employment prospects. [Read the briefing here.](#)



# 2025: OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

## Our journey of support for distance learners in prison:

**4,946**

Times we gave information, advice and guidance



**1,741**

Distance learning courses we funded



**115**

Prisons we funded courses in



## Our most popular courses:

1. NEBOSH HSE Award in Managing Risks and Risk Assessment - **270 learners**
2. NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety - **78 learners**
3. Nutrition to Support Physical Activity and Exercise - **60 learners**
4. Business Start-up - **58 learners**
5. CMI Certificate in Principles of Management and Leadership - **57 learners**



**8,050**

minutes spent on the Advice Line

**117** Number of courses offered in our prospectus



After completing a PET course

**86%** of learners felt able to cope with prison in a positive way

## What did people do next in prison, as a result of taking a PET course?

**61%** Further studies

**34%** Applying for a job

**53%** Volunteering



## What we do makes a difference. Our courses:

- reduce the chance of someone returning to prison by over 20%
- increase their chance of finding employment by over 20%



# Immediate impact

Many learners tell us about the benefits that studying a PET course can have in prison and after release.

These include the opportunity to change:

How is your distance learning course benefitting you?



Distance learning has benefitting me in a number of ways it has put me on the right path to take upon release and the opportunity to turn my life around since learning about NEBOSH it is all i've been thinking about this has been life changing for me i'm planning on doing as many levels i can whilst in jail and completing upon release thank you for this opportunity means alot

Kian's NEBOSH course is helping him achieve his goal of working in the health and safety sector upon release.

Supporting mental health:

Tom chose to study Principles of Plant Growth and Development to support his mental health and work towards a career in horticulture.

How is your distance learning course benefitting you?



I am grateful to PET for funding my course. The opportunity to gain a qualification provided a much needed boost to my confidence, self-worth and mental health. It has given a much needed distraction during periods of lock-up and helps me to retain a link to something I enjoy on the outside. I remain hopeful that the knowledge that I will gain will help towards my interest of plant conservation.

And hope for the future:

How is your distance learning course benefitting you?



STUDYING CANINE SCIENCE IS ANOTHER STEPPING STONE TO SECURE A FUTURE WITHIN THE ANIMAL CARE SECTOR ON ROTL'S AND FOR RELEASE! HAVING PET FUNDING IS EXTREMELY HELPFUL, ESPECIALLY FOR A SENTENCED PRISONER WHO STARTED OUT WITH NO HOPE FOR THE FUTURE! BUT NOW I HAVE HOPE AND AMBITION TO CONTINUE TO THRIVE, LEARN & SURVIVE. I CANT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR THE OPPORTUNITY YOU HAVE GIVEN ME!

Emily studied Canine Science due to a love of animals and a goal of working with them as a career upon release.



# Longer term impact

**Last year we shared the stories of Omar and Andy, who both told us about their experience of studying with PET in prison.**

Andy was at one of the lowest points in his life when he discovered PET. He had struggled with gambling for most of his life, causing difficulties with debt and drinking that had led to a prison sentence. Andy wanted to dig deeper into his life and understand more about himself so started a counselling certificate with PET.

“Prison put every one of my triggers in front of me: boredom, low self-worth, lack of purpose, lack of drive. Those things would drive me to need to gamble, because then I'd forget about everything going on.

But when those course books landed and I knew I had a purpose the next day - to be able to get up and get on with some work, to actually achieve something that I could be proud of – honestly, it changed the whole outlook.”

In prison - with the governor's support - he set up gambling peer support groups, but he wanted to understand more about drugs and alcohol because of the links with gambling. He approached PET for a drug and alcohol counselling course.

“That course gave me such a drive that, as soon as I finished it, the prison's Distance Learning Coordinator Linda said, "Well, what about another one?" So I went on to do Level 3 Agile Project Management with PET.”

Andy left prison with a collection of certificates and the determination to support other people who had difficulties with gambling. He now works for Beacon Counselling Trust on their Armed Forces Gambling Support Network Programme - delivering awareness and prevention training to serving personnel, veterans, families and the wider armed forces community. **[You can read Andy's full story here.](#)**

**Having left school at just 13, Omar read his first book in prison. It changed his whole outlook on life. We are so grateful to him for writing about his experience:**

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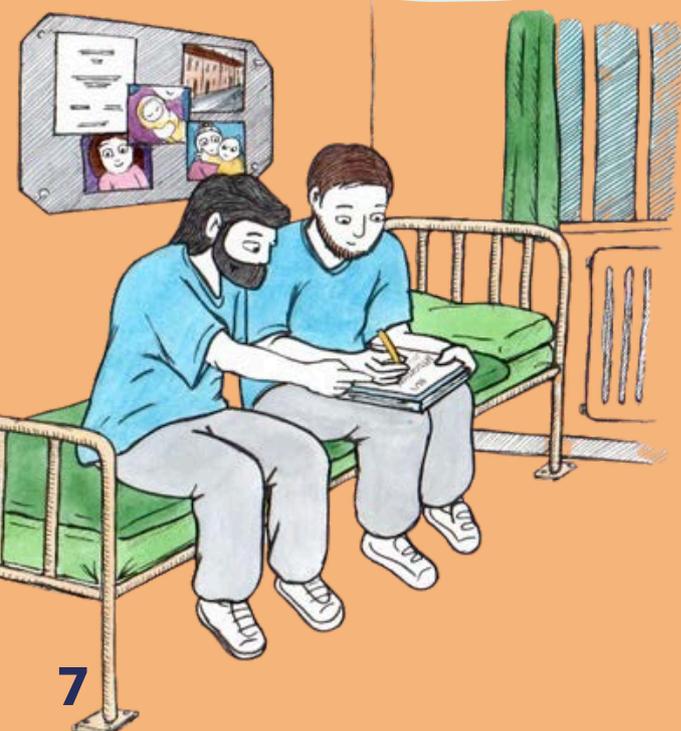
This interview isn't just my story, it's a call to rewrite the sentence. Education and reading has the power to break cycles, transform lives, and create opportunities for those who need it most.

Thank you to PET for the incredible work they do and for giving me the platform to share my journey. I hope my story inspires others to believe in the possibility of change.

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**I went to prison for the first time when I was 15 and was back in Pentonville in my twenties. That was the first time I'd gone back into education. The support they gave me – I'd never had it before.**

I read my first book in prison. It was Jack Higgins' *The Eagle Has Landed*. I read about a quarter of it, understood even less, but I loved the little bit I understood. I thought, **“Now I understand why people read.”** I started to realise that there is life and happiness outside of committing crime, and it is through reading and education.



I received an eight-year sentence and served four in prison. That's when education had the most impact for me. I dived headlong into it: I got up to Level 3 English, did an 18-month computer engineering course and reached out to PET to get funding for the Open University's People, Work and Society Access module.

**I lived at the library and that transformed me because with every book, every page that I turned, my value system changed. My orientation on life started to shift.**

I thought I'd come out of prison with the same intention of committing crime, but I grew so much on that sentence that I couldn't be around the people that I was with before. Conversations that I had before didn't resonate with me. My whole mindset, my whole value system, my whole outlook on life changed.



After prison, I studied for a Business Management and Entrepreneurship degree at the University of Sunderland in London.

**When I walked into the classroom, I just felt like I belonged there.** I felt like I could hold my own in this room of people. It opened me up to thinking that I actually have a lot to offer, that there are massive opportunities out there for me.

I've now founded my own organisation – [Anabranch Plus](#). We offer workshops, mentoring and career-focused programmes to help give prison leavers the skills and confidence they need to thrive in today's world. Right now a lot of people leaving prison think, "I've got to get a job to keep my probation happy." I want them to think, "I want to get a job so that I'm successful." **[You can read Omar's full story here.](#)**



**Thank you. Your generosity truly transforms lives  
and builds hope for people in prison.**

