

RUNFOREVER

And we will all be RUNNERS!

Annual Report February 2023 - March 2024

Runforever worked on two combined and interrelated actions:

1- Delivering the project of the running club as a bridge between prison and the community

2 - Nurturing the ground for systemic change

- From the beginning of the project in February 2023, Runforever involved 112 offenders in total (around 25 each Wednesday), 10 prison staff and 5 partner organisations (IFF - International Futures Forum, Shmu, Familiesoutside, Fife College and RGU - Robert Gordon University).
- Runforever delivered weekly running sessions on 50 Wednesdays, two sessions (morning and afternoon); a total of 100 running sessions between Wednesday 8th February 2023 - Wednesday 28th February 2024.
- We recorded 9 Runningstories radio shows - <https://runforever.org.uk/runningstories/> and continued the experience of the Photovoice (capturing runners' experience of the running club through photos and words with a health justice approach) in collaboration with Stephanie Morrison and RGU, <https://runforever.org.uk/photovoice/>. These are ways for co-creating value from the inside and highlight warm data (Nora Bateson, <https://warmdatalab.net/warm-data>)
- We organised fun runs and races inside and outside the prison. Last one was the Santa 10k run at HMPG on the 13th December 2023, <https://runforever.org.uk/santa-10k-run-2023/>
- We opened a conversation within the prison around health and wellbeing with some events: the first one was a "Finisher event" on the 7th of June 2023 and with the festival "Towards a sustainable healthy prison", <https://runforever.org.uk/festival-towards-a-sustainable-healthy-prison/>, on the 27th of September.
- Runforever received several publications acknowledging its activity:
 - July 2023: Stride Jogscotland magazine, Runforever – and we will all be runners! https://issuu.com/jogscotland/docs/stride_magazine_-_spring_2023/16
 - October 2023: Paolo Maccagno shortlisted as Jog Leader of the year, We reveal our shortlists for the jogscotland Awards 2023! <https://jogscotland.org.uk/shortlists-for-annual-awards-2023/>
 - October 2023: Runforever at HMP Grampian, <https://jogscotland.org.uk/jog-leader/paolo-maccagno/>
 - November 2023: Ex Offenders, Young Parents and Disabled Athletes Get Transforming Lives Boost, <https://athleticstrustscotland.org.uk/grant-release/>
 - 22 November 2023: Transforming Lives: ATS grants are handed out to 10 worthy groups, <https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/ats-grants-2/> , <https://jogscotland.org.uk/athletics-trust-scotland-awards-first-transforming-lives-grants/>
 - January 2024: Athletics Trust Scotland, Introducing our latest Transforming Lives Grant winner, https://www.instagram.com/p/C2ISZpBy9IW/?igsh=MXE1aHM3eTZjYnM1dQ%3D%3D&img_index=1
 - 27 January 2024: Jogging group at north-east prison HMP Grampian 'breaking barriers' say founders,

<https://www.aberdeenlive.news/news/aberdeen-news/jogging-group-north-east-prison-9060528>

- Runforever was celebrated in a motion at the Scottish Parliament on the 18th January 2024 for celebrating its activity, <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-11736>

Results:

Prisoner-runners improved their health and enjoyed being part of the running club. The number of people interested in the project is growing and there is demand for more sessions per week. Barriers between people involved in the project, prisoners, prison staff, partner organisations are loosening. The project has been very helpful in building relationships with all those involved and has been warmly welcomed by both offenders and prison staff; all are keen for the work to continue in the next months or years.

More specifically results include:

- Improving health and wellbeing of prisoners and ex-prisoners including the quality of their social relationships
- A growing community of support avoiding discrimination and stigma
- A regular radio show (Runningstories) and fun runs building bridges between diverse groups of people
- Improved trust and deep collaboration between the prison and partner organisations. All are keen for the work to continue in the next months or years.
- Runforever in collaboration with HMP Recovery, Health & Well-Being Strategy Group.

There are many underlying factors for prisoners to reoffend including childhood trauma, educational disadvantage, health inequality, unemployment, addiction, family breakdown and poverty. The running club has been helpful in providing the context where good and healthy social relationships can grow. This work has made a significant impact on the lives of prisoners leading to improved health, resilience, confidence and sense of self (individual and social). The running club works as a microcosm where prisoners could be together in a dignified and supportive environment, providing the context in which the traumatic experiences that have contributed to offending could be reframed. The project is interesting not only in terms of the health benefit for prisoners but for the awareness it raises about walls and separations. Therefore, its value goes beyond being a compassionate project towards a symbolic political action about raising awareness about walls and the world we live in.

Programme 2024 - Mentoring prisoners towards health

After one year of work, we feel that a collaboration at a deeper level has been established with HMP Grampian. We are now stepping into another phase of the project which more directly aims at being integrated with the new corporate plan of the prison towards a wider understanding of health which includes its social determinants (social inequalities/inequities and adverse childhood experiences) as suggested by the HMP Recovery, Health & Well-Being Strategy Group. This approach is coherent with Runforever's philosophy offering educational and mentoring opportunities for prisoners to develop self-awareness through marathon running and Feldenkrais, helping them in their path towards health and recovery. Runforever's programme for 2024 continues in this direction of travel which aims at humanising prison care/health care.

- Transition to deliver the running club through education and Fife college within the prison in line with our aims and understanding of running as an educational activity.
- Running sessions every week

- Series of running races and fun runs through the year to motivate runners, including HMP-New York marathon next November!
- Jog leaders mentoring course in collaboration with Fife College - training course for prisoners to learn the skills for mentoring other runners within the prison (on the basis of the Jog-leader training course, <https://jogscotland.org.uk/jog-leaders/jog-leader-courses/> and working towards Jogscotland qualification)
- Runningstories – radio show with Richard Skinner (HMP Media Unit)
- Photovoice with Stephanie Morrison (RGU and IFF)
- Screening event “26.2 to life” at HMP Grampian
- Participation to “Inspiring Change” Scottish Public Health Conference – 1st May 2024, <https://scotphconf.org/>. Accepted presentation: *Marathon running in prison suggests new paths for humanising prison care/health care.*
- Series of workshops with RGU, SUPN (Scottish University Prison Network <https://upnet-workblog.wordpress.com/>), and IFF (International Future Forums, <https://www.internationalfuturesforum.com/>): *Marathon running in prison suggests new paths for humanising prison care/health care.*
- New Feldenkrais course for runners and non-runners at HMP Grampian (subject to securing additional funding).
- Helping the transition back to social life for ex-offenders by facilitating links to running clubs outside (in collaboration with Outreach, HMP Recovery, Health & Well-Being Group and Shmu).

Funding and Accounts

Runforever pilot project in HMP Grampian in 2023 and prior work during 2022 was funded through private donations via IFF (International Futures Forum).

During 2023 we applied to several potential funders and received support from:

- £500 from Athletics Trust Scotland, <https://athleticstrustscotland.org.uk/funding/>
- £3,000 from The Allen Lane Foundation, <https://allenlane.org.uk/offenders-and-ex-offenders/>
- £5,000 funding from private donations through the International Futures Forum (IFF)
- £100 donation from Westhill Jogscotland running club.

Total income was £8,600 and total expenditure was £3,988 leaving a cash balance at year end of £4,612. These figures represent Runforever’s income and expenditure from November 2023 when the first grant was received. Paolo’s work with Runforever in 2022 and the first three quarters of 2023 was funded by a direct grant from International Futures Forum of £25,000 which was paid directly to Paolo.

The inspiration for Runforever and the delivery of all of its work is through Paolo Maccagno, with invaluable support from Mark Hope (Chair of Runforever) and Stephanie Morrison (RGU and IFF). The Management Committee is very appreciative of their skill, dedication and energy. We would also like to recognise the great support received from HMP Grampian’s staff and management, particularly Eilidh Smith and Paul Smith.

Mark Hope

Chair, on behalf of the Management Committee of Runforever

5th March 2024