

<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>Reference</b>	2021-10-YO01
3 Pillars Project		

<b>Visit Date</b>	<b>Visited By</b>
24 October	Karen Drury

<b>Grant Summary</b>
£60K; The purpose of this grant was to employ a mentor with lived experience at the Fitness Academy at Black Prince Trust which is a community sports venue in Lambeth. This is through the gate and post release support for young men using rugby as a 'trojan horse' for other life skills.

<b>Visit Details (People met, premises visited etc.)</b>
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Rather than visit the work at HMP Felton, I went to HMP Dovegate in Uttoxeter, where the same project is running. This is a Category B prison, which means the offenders are in prison for more than 10 years for offences which would include violence, arson, sexual assault, firearms and robbery.

I met Mike Crofts (Founder and CEO), Jen Mustoe-Castle (COO) and two additional workers Sarah and Josh.

I spoke briefly with Mike in the car park on the way into the prison (he parked next to me!) and he spoke about the partnerships he was developing with organisations such as Goldman Sachs, which, while they might not provide more than one afternoon volunteering a month, was a valuable name to have in terms of convincing other prospective partners.

I attended a workshop with 14 (?) participants and then joined the group outside to watch them play rugby. I was invited to introduce myself, and with the group having come to the conclusion that I was a representative of the 'money men', I was treated to some good-humoured ribbing.

The workshop was on the concept of control and asked the group to consider what control they had over their actions, thinking, feeling and physiology. As I participated in the conversation in my small group, it struck me how different these types of discussions would be for the participants. While I wasn't party to their personal histories in the same way as the 3P team, I felt honoured by some of the group's confidences, and was slightly surprised by how readily the two young men who I was with, spoke up.

I had been warned that this group was composed of some of the more challenging young men from the prison, and it was visible that some of the group wanted all this wussy stuff to be over so they could go out and play rugby. The 3P team have obviously got a lot of experience in managing them.

The rugby brought out a whole new side to the cohort I observed; the young men – all between the ages of 18 – 40ish – became joyful, focused (on winning!), and almost child-like. Given that some of them probably hadn't had a childhood before they offended, it was quite moving to see. It was also visible that teamwork, leadership skills and co-operation had also snuck in alongside the rugby skills. As someone said – in sport, you have to make decisions.

Jen explained that 3P are developing peer-led programmes, with prisoners who are still in prison, but studying a level 2 or 3 gym coaching qualification. The 3P team led the session I watched, but Josh told me that two of the cohort had taken the warm up sessions before lunch.

Jen also told me that the project at HMP Dovegate was going well because of the support of the prison staff; and in my conversation with the prison custody staff member while the group was playing rugby, she told me she'd noticed the difference in the inmates, their level of calm and general well-being.

#### **Information about the Organisation**

3Pillars Project (3PP) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that was registered with the Charity Commission in 2018. 3PP currently employs eight staff. A board of five Trustees support the staff team, two of whom have joined the board in the past year.

It provides sport-based mentoring through the gate and post release to work towards sustained education, employment, or training opportunities for the young men on the programme.

#### **Issues and Comments**

I asked about the London project; Mike said that London provided more operating challenges, if only because of the shortage of prison staff, and what he called 'cultural conflicts'.  
Because of the involvement of the 3P team in the work, it was difficult to ask questions; however, I certainly saw the project in action and this was impressive.

#### **Other Feedback**

No.