



HM Prison &
Probation Service



**HM PRISON
SERVICE**

Public Sector Prisons

HM Prison/YOI Erlestoke

**HMP/YOI Erlestoke
FAMILIES & SIGNIFICANT OTHERS
STRATEGY
2023-2024**

**Sarah Coombs
Governor
HMP/YOI Erlestoke**

February 2024

Changing Lives – Developing Together

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1. Introduction

*“I do want to hammer home a very simple principle of reform that needs to be a golden thread running through the prison system and the agencies that surround it. **That principle is that relationships are fundamentally important if people are to change**”*

Lord Farmer Review 2017

We believe everyone at HMP & YOI Erlestoke has a responsibility to help maintain all positive relationships.

Supporting a prisoner to develop meaningful and constructive relationships with his family or significant others is important work here, particularly considering the distance some of the families may have to travel to visit.

For the purpose of this guidance document, **Family** is defined as either relatives or significant people that a prisoner identifies as providing a constructive and supportive relationship.

At HMP & YOI Erlestoke we want to make visits less daunting, more child friendly and stimulating for all that attend whilst adhering to security protocols.

HMP & YOI Erlestoke is committed to develop new initiatives and support for those who do not have family or visits to help build or repair relationships or create new networks to get support during and after release.



HMP / YOI Erlestoke is an adult/young offenders prison in the county of Wiltshire.

It is operated by His Majesty's Prison Service.

HMP Erlestoke is the only prison in Wiltshire and is situated in the village of Erlestoke, near Devizes. It was originally created as a country house; built by Joshua Smith, a MP for Devizes, back in the late 18th century. After being damaged in a fire in the 1950s, it was converted into a prison.



At **HMP & YOI Erlestoke** we aim to **inspire, motivate and guide** residents to become the best they can be. Our focus is firmly fixed on reducing reoffending and preventing future victims or crime by preparing offenders for their release through accredited interventions programmes, skills and vocational based training and education, in a pro-social enabling environment.

We support our prisoners to progress through their sentence. Each prisoner has a named member of staff that is allocated as their *keyworker*. Together they discuss the benefits of building and maintaining family ties.

2. Contact us

HMP Erlestoke
Erlestoke
Devizes
Wiltshire
SN10 5TU

General phone number: 01380 814 250

Visits booking line: Booking line: 0300 303 0634
Monday to Friday, 9:15am to 5pm



Emergency contact

If you have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a friend or family member in HMP Erlestoke, please call the Safer Custody Hotline. There is an answer machine facility which is checked periodically three times a day. Please leave as much information as possible along with your telephone number so that staff can call you back within the following 24 hour period.

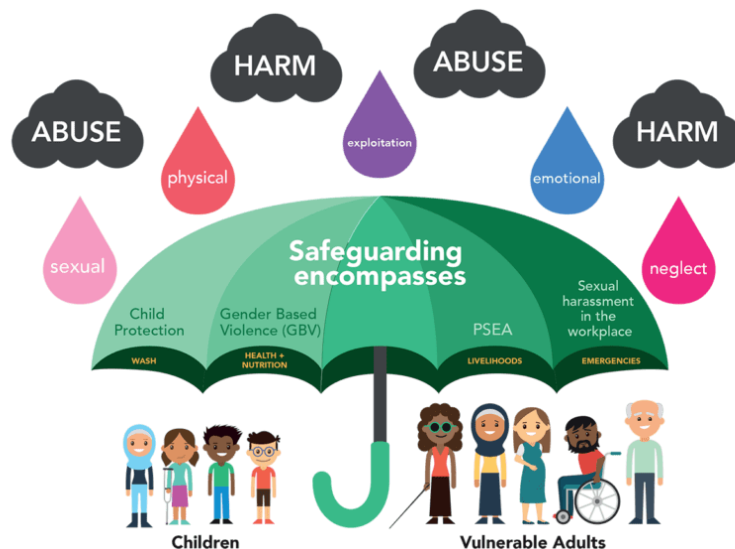
Safer Custody Hotline 01380 814 373

In an emergency or your call is urgent, please call the Main Switchboard and ask to speak with the Duty Manager. Main Switchboard 01380 814 250

National Families Helpline



Reporting Safeguarding Concerns



If you have any concerns regarding safeguarding please use the information below for reporting your concerns.

There is an answer machine facility which is checked periodically three times a day. Please leave as much information as possible along with your telephone number so that staff can call you back within the following 24 hour period.

Safer Custody Hotline 01380 814 373

01380 814373 Call this number if you have concerns about a prisoner's safety or wellbeing which are serious but not life-threatening or [complete a safer custody contact form](#) on the Prisoners' Families Helpline website.

In an emergency or your call is urgent, please call the Main Switchboard and ask to speak with the Duty Manager. Main Switchboard 01380 814 250



3. Visiting Erlestoke

To visit someone in HMP Erlestoke you must :

- be on that person's visitor list
- book your visit in advance
- have the [required ID](#) with you when you go

At least one visitor must be 18 or older at every visit.

There may be a limit to the number of visits a person can have. You can check this with Erlestoke.

[Contact Erlestoke](#) if you have any questions about visiting.

Help with the cost of your visit

If you get certain benefits or have an NHS health certificate, you might be able to [get help with the costs of your visit](#), including:

- travel to Erlestoke
- somewhere to stay overnight
- meals

How to book family and friends visits

Erlestoke is running a limited visits schedule. Visits are also happening differently than normal, observing [strict guidelines, which must be followed](#).

You can [book your visit online](#).

You can book your visit by telephone.

Booking Line : 0300 3030634

Booking Line Opening Times : Mon to Fri 9.15am to 5.00pm

[Find out about call charges](#)

Visiting times

- Thursday: 1:45pm to 3:45pm
- Friday: 1:45pm to 3:45pm
- Saturday and Sunday: 09.15 – 11.15 & 1:45pm to 3:45pm

How to book legal and professional visits

To book Legal visits please email: LegalVisits.Erlestoke@justice.gov.uk.

Getting to Erlestoke

[Find Erlestoke on a map](#)

The closest railway station is Westbury, which is about 7 miles from Erlestoke.

The Friends of Erlestoke Prison run a return transport service on visiting days from Westbury station and Devizes town centre.

To book the service:

Email: friendstransportscheme@gmail.com

Telephone or text: 07504 987190

[Find out about call charges](#)

To read more about The Friends of Erlestoke Prison transport scheme & other support from them please visit [Transport Service - The Friends of Erlestoke Prison](#)

To plan your journey by public transport:

- use [National Rail Enquiries](#)
- use [Traveline for local bus times](#)

There is a visitors car park at the main gate. Parking can be arranged nearer the entrance for those with access needs. [Contact Erlestoke](#) to discuss.



**FRIENDS OF
ERLESTOKE PRISON**

There are resources and signposts to support for families on the Friends of Erlestoke Prison website.

Please visit [Resources - The Friends of Erlestoke Prison](#) for a list of helpful sources of advice and resources.



4. Visiting facilities

There is a visitors centre run by the [Prison Advice and Care Trust \(PACT\)](#) charity. Family and friends can relax and get advice and support from the staff.

The Visitors Centre is open at the following times:

- Thursday: 12:30pm to 4:30pm
- Friday: 12.30pm to 4:30pm
- Saturday: 8:30am to 4:30pm
- Sunday 8.30am to 4:30pm

Telephone: 01380 816 828

[Find out about call charges](#)

[HMP Erlestoke | Prison Advice and Care Trust](#)

The Visitors Centre offers the following services

- We provide an information, guidance and a sign-posting service for issues such as alcohol and substance misuse, domestic violence etc.
- We provide advice and support about prison procedures.
- We provide someone to talk to in confidence if support is needed.
- We provide facilities to assist visitors e.g. having an on-site stair lift available for disabled visitors.

- We offer all visitors the chance to give feedback to help improve the visiting experience.
- When you arrive at the Visitors Centre, the staff will guide visitors through the booking-in procedure.
- We provide Family Support Workers available both in the Centre and inside HMP & YOI Erlestoke, for residents, families, friends and significant others.
- We provide an Integrated Substance Misuse services to support the families of those residents around substance misuse and alcohol concerns.

There is currently no food or drink available in the visits centre.

Toilet facilities are available.

Family days

Family days are arranged throughout the year. Please contact our PACT representative or Reducing Reoffending team at the prison for dates of upcoming days.

Entering Erlestoke

Staff will direct you to the main gate once the visits staff are ready for you to enter

All visitors, aged 16 or older must prove their identity before entering the prison.

Visitors should dress appropriately. You may be turned away if you are wearing items like revealing clothing or clothing with offensive slogans. Ask at the visitors centre if you have questions about appropriate dress.

All visitors will need to be given a rubdown search (similar to that you would receive in an airport), including children. You may also be screened by drug detection dogs.

The rules of your visit will be explained to you by an officer when you enter the visits area. If you have not visited Erlestoke, or a prison before, please ask staff if you have any questions.

After your visit

If you have any concerns after your visit, a member of the PACT team will be on hand in the visitors centre and will be happy to speak to you. You can report concerns to unified staff at any time during your visit or by ringing the Safer Custody line



5. Keep in touch with someone at Erlestoke

There are several ways you can keep in touch with someone during their time at Erlestoke.

Secure video calls

Secure video calling is available at this prison. Family and friends will need to download the Prison Video app, create an account, register all visitors and add the prisoner to their contact list.

[Read more about how it works](#)

Phone calls

Prisoners have phones in their rooms. They have to buy phone credits to keep their account in credit.

They can phone anyone named on their list of friends and family. This list is checked by security when they first arrive so it may take a few days before they are able to call.

You can also exchange voicemails using the [Prison Voicemail service](#).

Officers may listen to phone calls as a way of preventing crime and helping keep people safe.

Email

You can send emails to someone in Erlestoke using the [Email a Prisoner service](#).

You might also be able to attach photos and receive replies, depending on the rules at Erlestoke.

Letters

You can write at any time.

Include the person's name and prisoner number on the envelope.

If you do not know their prisoner number, [contact Erlestoke](#).

All post, apart from legal letters, will be opened and checked by officers.

Storybook Dads: Residents can create a recording of their voice for children and this will be made into a visual storybook DVD for children to keep and watch as a bedtime story, or through the day. This scheme is run by the Library.

Prison Visitors: Residents who do not have anyone who is able to visit can request to have a volunteer prison visitor who will visit and provide

support through phone calls or as a pen pal. This service is offered by the Chaplaincy Department.

Foreign national phone credit and letters: Foreign national residents are entitled to convert their standard visiting orders to phone credit to make calls abroad or airmail letters.

Assisted Prison Visiting Unit (APVU): Visitors can claim back up to two visits a month travel costs through APVU. Terms and conditions apply and booklets and information are available in the Visitors Centre, on the website or via telephone.

Send money and gifts

You can use the free and fast [online service to send money to someone in prison](#).

You can no longer send money by bank transfer, cheque, postal order or send cash by post.

If you cannot use the online service, you may be able to [apply for an exemption](#) - for example if you:

- are unable to use a computer, a smart phone or the internet
- do not have a debit card

This will allow you to send money by post.

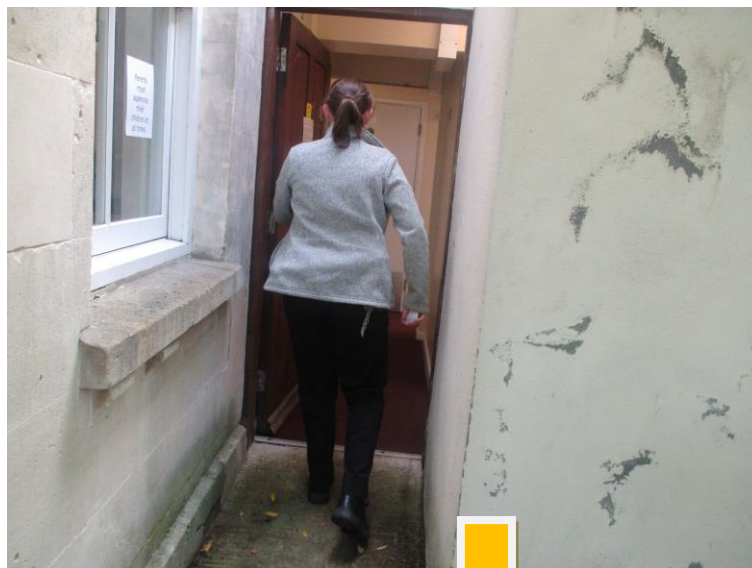


6. VISITS

HMP Erlestoke Visiting Pathway



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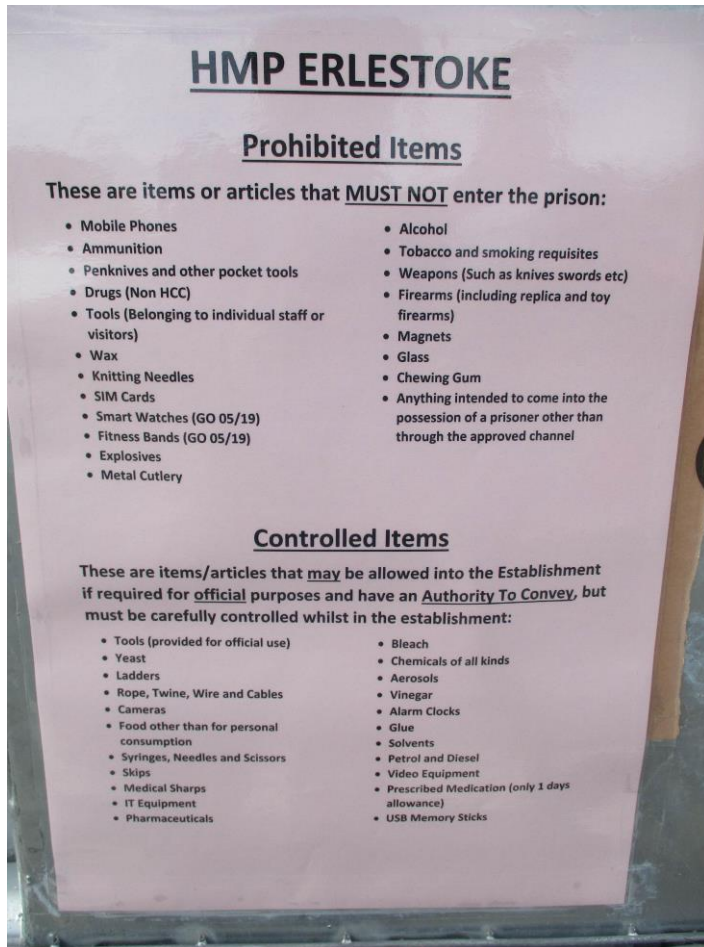
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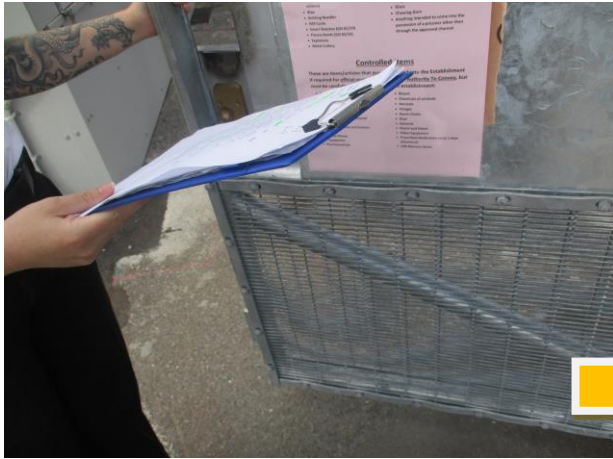
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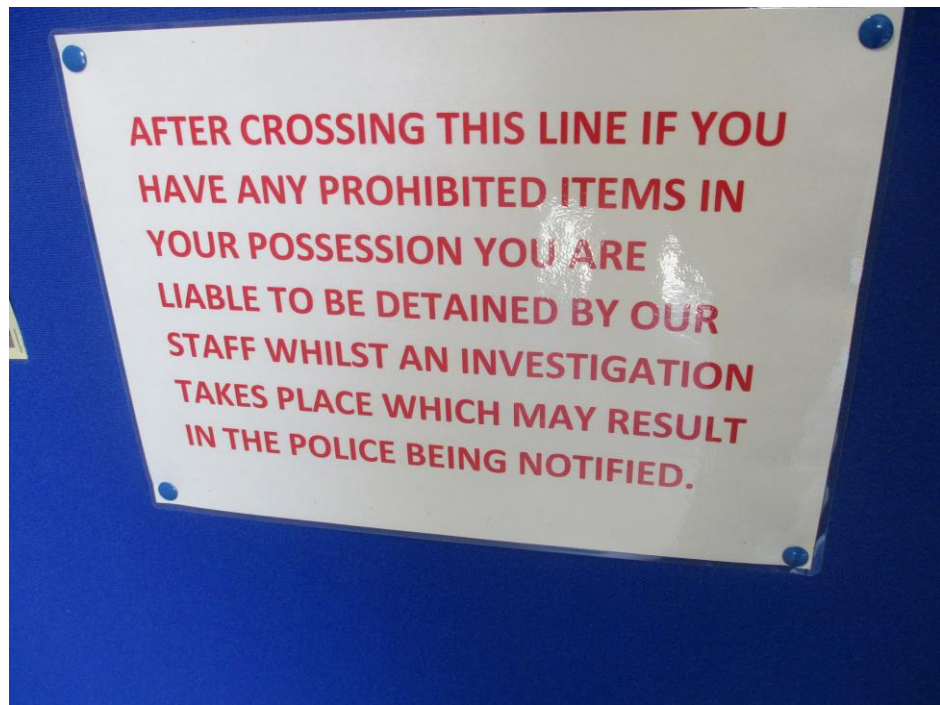
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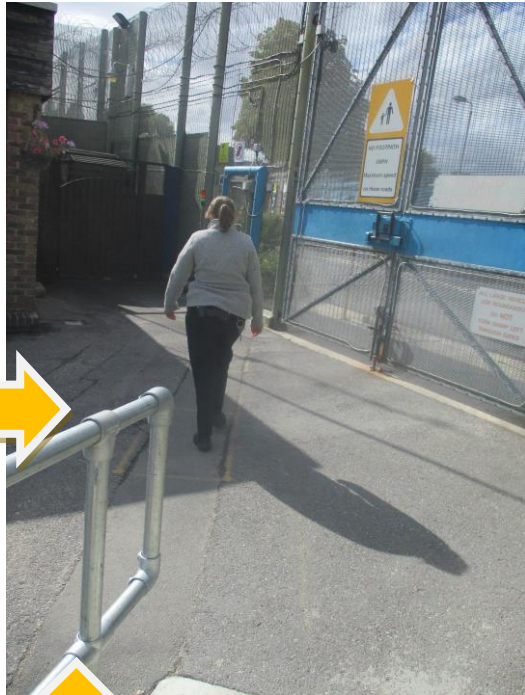
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Step by Step into Your Visit

1. Our Visits Centre is situated to the right of the main entrance. Parking is also available. Disabled parking is in the car park directly outside the prison in the upper car park.
2. Check in with our staff at the visits centre.
3. Staff will discuss your visit with you and offer any help you may need. They will take your details, check you in for your visit and issue you a wrist band.
4. Please keep your wrist band on at all times.
5. Staff will let you know when to start making your way up to the gate.
6. You will see a list of prohibited and controlled items that must not be brought into the prison. This list is on display in the visits centre and entrance to the prison.
7. Please show your ID to the gate staff in order to enter the prison.
8. Staff will check your ID and then confirm your arrival on the visits daily list.
9. You will need to pass through the scanner and be searched in the Enhanced Gate Security pod. Please take all items from your pockets and remove outer coats prior to going through the scanner. If you have used an airport recently it is a similar process.
10. Make your way through the scanner.
11. Ensure you are not in possession of any prohibited items prior to crossing the line shown in photograph 12.
12. Declare any items prior to this point.
13. You will receive a level B or level A rub down search. Full details of this search are on display in the EGS.
14. Your belongings will also be searched.
15. Our search dogs will be present and you will be asked to engage in the



Childrens Area

Within the visits hall is a dedicated area for children that is supervised by our colleagues from PACT.

There are various activities available for children to play with and also plenty of games etc that can be taken to the table so that all the family can join in.

We are also introducing sensory activities in the near future.

7. For those unable to visit/receive visits.

Prison Visitors: Residents who do not have anyone who is able to visit can request to have a volunteer prison visitor who will visit and provide support through phone calls or as a pen pal. This service is offered by the Chaplaincy Department.

VO's to phone credit or letters: Residents who do not use all of the Standard Visiting Orders can choose to convert them into extra phone credit or letters. This is subject to IEP status and can be done through the visits department.

Foreign national phone credit and letters: Foreign national residents are entitled to convert their standard visiting orders to phone credit to make calls abroad or airmail letters.

Secure Video Calling: Residents are currently entitled to a free video call, once per month. These can be requested via the 'Video Visits' app, which visitors have to download and follow the instructions on, in order to register

Emailaresident.com: Visitors can email direct, at the cost of only a 2nd class stamp. Once the email is received at Erlestoke a member of staff will print it off and hand it to the resident. Visitors can also pay the cost for residents to send a letter back via an email.

We now have in cell phones installed, meaning your family member will have more opportunity to contact you at a time that fits in with you and your children

8. Future Plans

Our commitment to visitors and residents in 2024 and beyond

We are looking at ways to continue to improve our visits provision for Families and Significant Others at Erlestoke, with plans to hold themed family days throughout 2024 and 2025.

We have various ideas on improving outside areas for children, subject to funding and Security issues and we would welcome ideas and initiatives from all prisoners and their families.

We want our Visits Centre and Visits Hall to be the best that it can be so we are committed to achieving our comprehensive action plan.

How will we measure our success?

- By the variety of Family, Friends and Significant Others visits offered, including those that don't have visits
- By the number of spaces/attendees available for each visit
- By the statistics collated regarding ethnicity, race and cultural attendance on family events
- By the number of residents on the family unit from different ethnicities, races and cultures
- By listening to residents and families through regular forums and recording and sharing comments and feedback
- By event feedback forms and the family comments book
- By the uptake from staff to undergo additional training e.g. Safeguarding.
- By feedback from families that have taken part in support groups such as Turning Point.

Care Leavers and Looked after Children

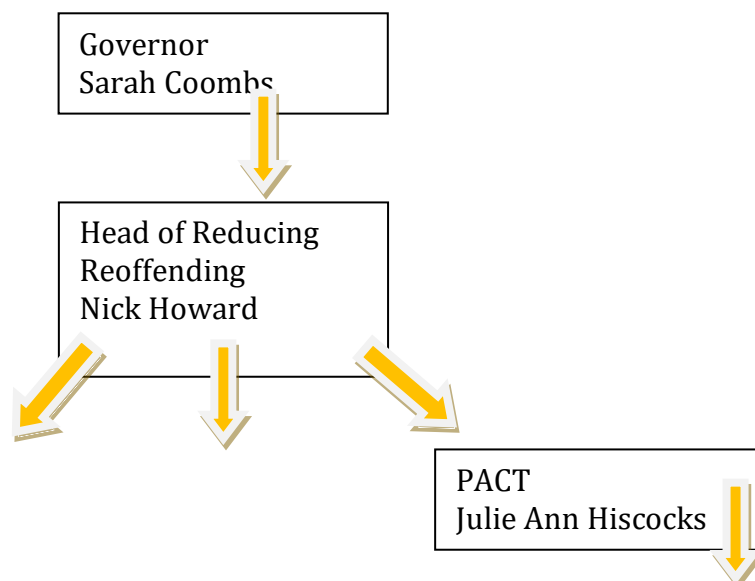
We are aware that there are a significant number of prisoners in our care who are either Care Leavers, Care Experienced or were Looked After Children –

A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked after child. Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care, a term which many children and young people prefer.

And we will look to work with providers inside and outside of custody to better support these individuals when they are identified and prior to release to ensure that the best opportunities are made available to them.



9.Staffing Structure



Activities Manager &
F&SO lead
Sean Wilshire

Security Custodial
Manager
Emma Jarmolinski

Volunteer Sector
Partners

At Erlestoke the management fully supports the work done in visits with the prisoners and their families. This work is prioritized and reviewed at regular meetings with the pathway lead, PACT local lead and the management team of PACT regionally.

