

"At 6' 1" in height, I went into prison a reasonably trim 12.5 stone with a healthy BMI. I came out a few years later at around 16 stone. On average I think I gained over 16lbs per year".

Ex-prisoner

With obesity at an all time high, there has never been a greater urgency to address the detrimental effect poor food choices and lack of exercise can have on an individual.

HELP introduces safe and structured exercise, whilst encouraging and supporting participants to achieve their goals. Whether it be increased fitness levels, weight loss or physical rehabilitation, all are encouraged to engage at their own pace.

Group-based sessions are delivered once a week for 2hrs. The first hour brings focus to nutrition and the second to exercise.

With the objective of helping people change their relationship with exercise and food for good, **HELP** offers new ways of thinking about food and exercise, with a focus on group support, sharing ideas and experiences with participants contributing as much, or as little, as they feel comfortable with.

The programme includes:

- A 1-hour staff training session on how to deliver the **HELP** Programme.
- A comprehensive 'Facilitator Folder' containing weekly Session Plans and all supporting resources.
- Scales that measure not only weight, but BMI and Muscle Mass.
- Stepometers for a group of 10 people to support a daily walking challenge.
- A selection of plastic foods you will need to help make sessions on nutrition tangible.
- **New for 2026** - a 'women' specific section for the female estate which considers the impact of peri and menopause on nutrition.

The feedback speaks for itself:

I found out about HELP while on an activity session and I am made up I joined. This has given me so many tools to help me to continue to lose weight.

Participant, HMP Altcourse

I learned a lot. I have more energy and I'm fitting into my clothes better. It has been better for my diabetes too.

Participant, HMP Altcourse

Across the group, three participants lost a total of 23lbs, an average of 7.6lbs.

Facilitator, HMP Altcourse

The group worked well together, were supportive of each other and were open about their relationship with food. By doing this programme they were able to make informed choices and all were successful in achieving weight loss; a total of 2stone 13.5lbs between all six participants over the 6-week programme.

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