

5th Nov 2009

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE: BOURNEMOUTH

Thursdays 4pm – 6pm BCHA, Dorset Lodge

Back to work

Resettlement Pathway: Employment / Finance, Benefit, Debt

Participants: 4 Offenders, 1 B'mouth Council, 1 BCHA & 2 Job Centre

LEARNINGS

"I've just been released without any of my benefits being sorted out, I've got to try to register on the phone-line now which takes ages and is a real nightmare."

(Ex-offender)

"Sometimes the staff at the Job centre aren't helpful, there seems to be a lots of things which we aren't told about."

(Ex-offender)

"I don't understand how the new housing system works, I was homeless and rated "green", now I'm in a hostel I'm "amber" which means I don't think I'll ever get a flat."

(Ex-offender)

There is help getting back to work, but sometimes it's not easy finding it.

Having a criminal record makes it more difficult, but there are people out there who will employ you.

Sometimes your housing situation doesn't help you find employment.

"I need driving lessons, if I had a license I could get a better job. Will the Jobcentre pay for lessons?"

(Ex-offender)

"Couldn't you get a job where you don't need to drive and pay for your own lessons?"

(Agency)

"You can't get a job when you're at Dorset Lodge, you'd have to pay the rent yourself which is £160 a week, where are you going to find something paying this much?"

(Ex-offender)

"There is discretionary help available from the Job centre. If you're on Incapacity benefits, with the help available you will always be better off if you're working."

(Agency)

"I've spoken to the Council about jobs with the refuse collections and they say they will take people with criminal records, but you have to apply through an agency. When you speak to the agency they say they won't take you if you have a record. I feel like lying to them to get something, but I'll be back inside if I'm caught."

(Ex-offender)



Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue brings Bournemouth offenders together in open conversation with the agencies responsible for their supervision and support. Dialogues are themed on the issues affecting re-offending. The process starts in custody and continues post-release in the community, emphasising support, challenge, responsibility and early intervention. Threshold Dialogue is supported by Bournemouth Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.