

13th May 2008

Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue

'Where everyone learns but nobody teaches.'

Tuesdays 2 - 3.30pm Chapel HMP Dorchester

Bleak House

9 offenders, 2 Staff members, 1 External Agency and 2 from PD took part.

Learnings

When you haven't got a lot going on for you in life, drugs can take the edge off the sense of bleakness.

Offenders think Police use notebook evidence to stitch them up – Police see consistency and accuracy as being necessary to secure a just conviction.

Every person is an individual. There's no 'one-size-fits-all' solution that will reduce re-offending.

'Being clean is wicked – not waking up every morning thinking about a boot up. Being able to hang around in bed and cuddle my missus without having to get myself sorted. My relationships were better than ever.' (Offender)

'If I smoke cannabis, I'm all right, I can stay off the gear. But when I've gone totally clean my life has seemed awful – so bleak and miserable. It's hard to cope with that bleakness.' (Offender)

'I want to apologise to you for us all firing questions at you this afternoon. It's been really helpful to talk with you, thanks for taking the time to come in – this group is very beneficial.' (Offender)

'I've seen police officers getting pulled apart in court because their notebook evidence isn't up to scratch. I've had a judge dismiss my evidence because it was written up the day after the event and wasn't 'fresh enough'. We have to deal with cases going to court months, sometimes years after the arrest incidents. We can't possibly remember everything without writing it down.' (Police)



'I started taking heroin when I was 12, I was injecting by 13 and hooked by 14. It's been almost 10 years of using that's gotten me to the point where I'm getting ready to put it behind me. I see people that just started out and I hope they don't have to go through what I've had to get free of the stuff.' (Offender)

'When I was a kid I got a buzz from sticking two fingers up to the system. You couldn't tell me anything – I could have had the hardest con telling me to straighten out and I wouldn't have listened. It's only now I'm almost 30 that I've started taking notice of what's really going on.' (Offender)

'I think you all come in with the best of intentions but it goes straight out the window when you get out. There's a hard end to this that I have to deal with – last Thursday I got a call to an unconscious person in the town centre – he was going blue, I gave CPR – ambulance took him off... he died. This stuff kills people and I'm the one left putting bodies in mortuary fridges.' (Police)

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, change, responsibility and early intervention. The intervention is supported by Bournemouth Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership