

Prison Threshold Dialogue (6) Cycle 2 on 14th August 07

5 Prisoners, 1 Governor, 1 Probation Officer, 1 Prison Officer and 1 from Prison Dialogue participated in the dialogue

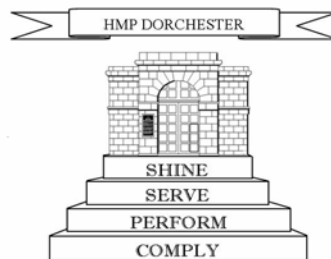
'It's hard to state this too strongly – We Want You To Succeed. It may not seem like it when you're being recalled to prison, and mistakes do happen- the thing to remember is stretched resources, workload – plus your genuine, valid reason for whatever has been used as a blag by 1000's of people before you.' (Staff)

'Probation has been a mess for me in the past. I've had a bad meeting and I'm coming out the door on the phone to my dealer. There's nothing like Probation to get you to hit your **** it point.' (Offender)

'It's our responsibility to assess risk and work from there. If alcohol is your trigger – we call it a disinhibitor – then if you attend a supervision meeting stinking of booze it won't play well for you.' (Staff)

"I've been in a supervision meeting where it's all going ok for me. I think I'm good and signed off, then I'm walking away from the office down the road 10 minutes later and a police van pulls up, 'You've been recalled'. I can't trust someone who has that much power over my life." (Offender)

Theme: Probation Issues



"I just want to go home to my wife. There haven't been any issues for us other than her being upset that I've been using. She wants me back. But Probation say I have to go and stay in a hostel as an approved address on my licence, which puts me in an unsafe environment around other users – or sex offenders that I don't want to mix with. I feel I'm being set up to fail."

"I can't comment on individual cases in a group session, but the requirement for you to live in an approved address will only be for a limited period. When you're released on licence you're still serving your sentence. That's what so many people forget. You're not a free agent. You still have to answer for your movements and if you slip up then yes, you will come back to prison." (Staff)

"It's been helpful coming here. I was expecting it to be a bit of a bashing session for Probation, but it's been open and honest. I'd like to come again, I'd encourage my colleagues to attend." (Staff)

'Funny, today has solved nothing for me – but it's a start. We're not going to get anywhere badmouthing Probation – oh sure, we've all been so hard done by in here... I want to understand your decisions. I'm closer after today.' (Offender)

The next Prison Threshold Dialogue will take place on Tuesday 21st August @ 2.00pm in the Chapel, HMP Dorchester