

24<sup>th</sup> June 2008

## BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns  
but nobody teaches

PRISON DIALOGUE

Tuesdays 2 - 3.30pm Chapel HMP Dorchester

It all comes back to choices

5 Offenders, 2 Staff members, 3 External Agencies and 2 from PD took part

LEARNINGS

"We run youth clubs for areas in North Bournemouth where there isn't anything for kids to do. We've found that young people are quite territorial. They won't go somewhere 10 minutes up the road, the activity needs to be available where they are."  
(Agency)

"My brother wrote me a letter, I've got it here. He's saying that my family will do anything to help me as long as I give up the drink. He says that I've caused them a lot of pain. I've got to give up alcohol, but I like drinking."  
(Offender)

"It's not to do with lack of choices. For people getting released from prison the problem is going from having hardly any choices to having more choices than they can cope with. Too many. That's when they go back to what they know, where they feel comfortable."  
(Staff)

Having too many choices can be as difficult as having no choice whatsoever.

"I've done youth work before in Southampton. They've got a proper set up there to use ex-offenders in youth clubs. You go along with a mentor and get settled in for a few weeks while you make your connections, it's all well supervised. I'd like the opportunity to get involved in something like that again. I've taken enough - I want to know that I can give something back."  
(Offender)



"I've been in Bournemouth since 1983. It seems that the whole place is geared towards tourism and the blue rinse brigade. Anything else they want to sweep under the carpet. They've got a big problem that they need to address but the priority always seems to be to build yet another 5 star hotel on the beachfront."  
(Offender)

"It's been good to come back for a second time. When I was here two weeks ago for the first time I was quite nervous because I'd never been in a prison before and I can get claustrophobic. Without those worries it's been easier to participate today. Lots of ideas to take forward."  
(Agency)

"You can order people to do things. It's not so bad, we all get told to do things we don't want to do and we just get on and do it. I've had that since my days in the army."  
(Offender)  
"Today's been more about how people really think and feel."  
(Agency)

Offender involvement in volunteering and youth work is a good idea, but realising it would require a fully risk-assessed supervision and mentoring structure.

Agencies learn more from coming to several sessions because they get more than just a snap shot.

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.