

26<sup>th</sup> Jan 2010

# BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns  
but nobody teaches

PRISON DIALOGUE: HMP DORCHESTER

## Meet the Magistrates

Tuesdays 2 – 3:30pm Chapel

Resettlement Pathway: attitudes, Thinking & Behaviour

Participants: 16 Offenders, 1 Police, 1 CRI, 2 Prison Staff & 2 Magistrates

### LEARNINGS

"Magistrates court is a police court; you always will side with the police and listen to what they say."

(Offender)

"That is not true; we listen to all the evidence and everything that is said before making any judgement."

(Magistrate)

"I was in magistrates court and could not hear a word that was being said because I am partially deaf. I had no idea what was going on but no one listened to me. I went to say something and was told to shut up."

(Offender)

"You have to instruct your brief with anything like this and tell them everything so that you can get a proper hearing and a fair chance, but I will take this back to my colleagues and make them aware of what happened."

(Magistrate)

Magistrates are just normal people too.

Knowledge is power. Tell your solicitor everything they need to know to help.

"I went to court and there was no evidence of the courses I have done for my drug use or anything else. When I said this the judge just thought I was lying about what I had done."

(Offender)

"I have to keep saying this; keep in touch with your probation officer; write to them every month and let them know what is happening with you. Then they will know who you are and what you are doing."

(Prison Staff)

Build a relationship with your probation officer.

"I am in here because someone burgled my property and I fought back. They are still free. How does that work?"

(Offender)

"You are only entitled to use reasonable force in defending yourself; you cannot lock someone in a cupboard and slash them with a knife."

(Magistrate)

"Nothing makes me happier than when someone is before me and they have completed a probation order and turned their life around. I became a magistrate to try to help people."

(Magistrate)



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.