

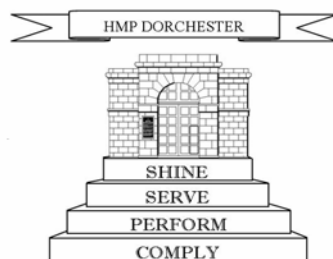
Prison Threshold Dialogue (8) Cycle 3 on 27th November 07

5 Prisoners, 1 Senior Probation Officer, 1 Prison Officer and 1 from PD participated in the dialogue

"You're alright to start off with, you go to court a few times and get community sentences or a DRR or something. That's the way the courts deal with you. But once you've been in prison they just sentence you to custody every time you go back. It's like your card's been marked." (Offender)

"Where have the YO's gone? Did we scare them off?" (Offender)

'I feel like I stopped having a choice what with doing drugs. I started by choosing but then it got out of hand. It's not like they made me do it but they got me in trouble with police and probation and coming here and being recalled. Bouncing around. Never getting stable. It's worn me down over a period of time. Changing takes energy - I'm not sure if I have that, let alone the confidence.' (Offender)



"We see so many of the same faces coming through time and time again. It's difficult not to get a bit cynical about it because there are people in jail that I think are lost causes. I'd be really happy if they sorted it out and proved me wrong. There are success stories. There are people that stay away from jail but we sometimes don't see or perhaps acknowledge the small changes- it doesn't happen overnight." (Prison Officer)

'I want to make choices in my life. I think I can still do it but it takes a lot of guts and willpower. There are success stories out there. Maybe they are only one beer away from a relapse but they're still there, still carrying on with jobs and lives and not using.' (Offender)

'Now we've got the new meth landing everyone's all chilled out. If you took away the methadone it'd be chaos.' (Offender)

'There is support out there but you have to put as much footwork in as possible. So many people want it on a plate- all the agencies and voluntary organisations in the world won't make it work for them. But it's all there if you make the decision. All that change seems like such a big hill to climb from where you are, but it's one step, one day at a time. Cliches I know, but still true.' (Staff)

'It's different for me day-to-day. I go up and down a bit and stuff knocks around my head that doesn't get heard what with being in prison. I feel energised by today. Don't know how long that will last but it's a start.' (Offender)

The next Prison Threshold Dialogue will take place on Tuesday 4th December @ 2.00pm in the Chapel, HMP Dorchester