

27th May 2008

Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue

'Where everyone learns but nobody teaches.'

Tuesdays 2 - 3.30pm Chapel HMP Dorchester

No Easy Answers

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

Learnings

'No I don't feel responsible. I feel like the product of an upbringing that had me taking hard drugs from the age of 7 onwards, that had me out on jobs when I was too young to know any different. I can't change now – I am what I am.' (Offender)

'Yes there's a void. How do people like us fill that? Drugs become such a huge part of our lives – if we're ever going to change we've got to have something to fill the hole.' (Offender)

'Housing, housing, housing. It's what it always comes down to. Where will I stay when I'm released? If I haven't got a place – if I'm left to my own devices – I'll be straight back in here.' (Offender)

It's hard to take responsibility and move forward if you haven't had the opportunity to process your past.

'I don't see how I'm supposed to stay 'intelligence free' for any length of time. I AM the intel – if they see me walking down the street – it's reported. If they see me talking to someone – it's reported. If they see me going into a house they can turn over that house just on the basis that I've been there. I don't see the difference between targeting and harassment.' (Offender)



Society has to balance the need to give people a fresh start on release with monitoring to protect the public based on individual's offending histories.

'There's a big difference between bumping into a friend in the street, having a natter and then going on your separate ways and being seen hanging out and going places with that person. Bottom line: they know if you're active or not. It's how it is – you can't get in a twist about it.' (Offender)

'It's frustrating knowing that you need to be given a fresh start, while at the same time realising that society needs to be protected and with that comes monitoring. How do you work with that? The community isn't going to be sympathetic to your needs.' (Agency)

'It's been an eye opener for me. I'd like to thank all of you for being so open today. I didn't come here expecting to find any easy answers and in that respect, I haven't been surprised.' (Agency)

'I'm out next week – looking forward to hooking up with the community dialogue.' (Offender)

Enforcement can be a type of support

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