

6th May 2008

# Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue

'Where everyone learns but nobody teaches.'

Tuesdays 2 - 3.30pm Chapel HMP Dorchester

## Police and Thieves

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

### Learnings

'We used to be able to do it – we had work gangs out cleaning the beaches in Portland under uniform supervision. I think it's a great idea, the difficulty from the prison's side is one of risk management – namely escapes.' (Staff)

'If you need to recover property but you've been ordered to stay away from an address, Police can accompany you there to prevent a breach of the peace – it's a common procedure.' (Police)

'I'm looking forward to getting out on Thursday – Footprints are meeting me and I'm coming along to The Clubhouse for Threshold Dialogue next Tuesday – I'm bringing my sponsor along!' (Offender)

**Housing: The issues are less about what's available and more about how to keep hold of the accommodation you've already got.**

'On one side we've got suspects going 'no comment' on solicitors advice, on the other we've got the CPS who won't proceed unless there's good chance of a conviction. If people want to drag it out and go 'not guilty', then we will do what we have to - seize clothing etc. That seems vindictive perhaps, but when you see what we put up with, it's pretty understandable.' (Police)

**Police feel frustrated by the adversarial legal system. It gets in the way of co-operation and doesn't always work in offender's or society's best interests.**

**Most people in the group think that work gangs are a realistic option to consider for community sentencing.**



'I got thrown out of my accommodation when I tested positive for cannabis and that set me right off. Once I was out of the house I got breached and recalled by probation and I'm back in here for three months. I couldn't go back in the dry house – I was a bit stuck. I hope it's going to go better this time.' (Offender)

'I get annoyed and dispirited seeing agencies promise people housing places when they know the space may not be available for another six weeks. Then they only tell me with 48 hours to go before release. I have to deal with it on the frontline – it's so, so frustrating.' (Staff)

'I'm just sick of arresting the same people all the time in Bournemouth Town centre. I'm here to find out about the issues and see if there's anything that can be done to help prevent this happening.' (Police)

'I want to engage, I want to go to university – I don't want to come back.' (Offender)

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