

7th July 2009

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

PRISON DIALOGUE: HMP DORCHESTER

Where you go when you cross the prison gate

Tuesdays 2 – 3:30pm Chapel

Resettlement Pathway: Housing

Participants: 7 Offenders, 2 Prison Staff & 1 BCHA

LEARNINGS

"I was refused asylum and am appealing. What help with housing is there for me? I have no NI number and can't work. What can I do?"

(Offender)

"Every country must be on its guard as resources are precious.

Immigration will consider your application but unless the evidence is compelling it will be rejected."

(Prison Staff)

"I'm surprised to learn that if you appeal against being refused to stay in the country, you are just turned loose in the community. That makes no sense to me. I will try to find out if that's right."

(Prison Staff)

"You don't get any help with housing if you're a national of this country. Many people leave the prison NFA. If you haven't got the money, you're on your arse. We're all in the same boat."

(Offender)

When you are ready to change, the help and support is available.

Working with people when they slip encourages honesty and keeps people in their home.

The process of seeking asylum is tough, restrictive & uncompromising in contrast to perceptions out there.

"I know that in certain supported accommodation drug use is rife and people are getting away with it. I think the drug testing regimes need to be more rigorous to protect the ones with a determination to stay clean."

(Offender)



"There have been times when one person using has had a domino effect and that kind of situation has arisen. People will have slips and we do all we can to engage with the person and the wrap around services. We will then give the person the option of taking up the help available. If they don't, they will lose that accommodation."

(BCHA)

"We try to have an inclusive approach. Once you evict someone then it will probably lead to a full blown habit and back into prison. That's the revolving door scenario that this dialogue wants to prevent. We need to keep people in their homes and have an honest environment to work with people if we want to progress."

(BCHA)

"It's good to hear of the approach being taken by BCHA. I understand the view that is not right but I know that wherever you go people will be using drugs. I'm on my own journey and will do what's best for me. You can't be in people's faces 24/7. The help and support is there if you want it."

(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, challenge, responsibility and early intervention. Threshold Dialogue is supported by Bournemouth Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.