

12th May 2009

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

PRISON DIALOGUE: HMP GUYS MARSH

Is it a conspiracy?

Tuesdays 9–10:30am Chapel

Resettlement Pathway: Attitudes, Thinking & Behaviour / Drugs & Alcohol

Participants: 8 Offenders, 2 Prison Staff, 1 B'mouth Council & 1 Jobcentre

LEARNINGS

"I'm a MAPPA. Every month probation, the police, the council and other agencies get together and decide what level you are and then they tell you. I don't even know when my meetings are, I just get told what decisions they've made." (Offender)

"I'm due for an oral panel. I'm dreading it. It's all down to the paperwork and if that top page says that you're still a risk they won't even read the file underneath. You don't get to put your side of things first." (Offender)

"Three quarters of the men in prison have come through the care system. They've been in children's homes or in care and when they reach 16 they're out on the streets. No-one looks after them anymore and they don't get any help. Nobody cares." (Offender)

Whatever you believe about how society works you still have to find a way of living in it.

"Something like 80% of men are in prison for offences they committed because of alcohol or drugs." (Offender)

"No-one looks at why people have committed the offence they've committed. We need to get to the reasons why and then deal with those." (Agency)

"Everybody that works in probation is useless. They don't care about people they just care about getting their money. In fact nobody who works with the prison system really cares, they're just in it to put food on the table at the end of the day." (Offender)

"That's a blanket statement about probation. You can't say that about all of them. There are some good people there who do care. There are people from other agencies that work with prisoners that care about them and give up their own time to help prisoners and ex-prisoners." (Agency)

"Prison is a business. People make money out of it. It isn't there to rehabilitate people." (Offender)

"If a system doesn't work surely you should change it? Changes do happen. For example you don't get thrown out of Dorset Lodge the first time you use now. They work with you to find out what's happened and support you to not use again." (Agency)

Decisions made on paper or behind closed doors about people's lives are harder to deal with than those that are discussed openly.

People who work for agencies are a mixed bunch, but there are a lot of people who genuinely care about prisoners and their lives.



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.