

## DIRECTORS REPORT

The Directors submit their Report, together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 May 2003.

### DIRECTORS DURING THE YEAR

Messrs C Lindley, C Marks and H Pidgeon and Miss N Shields served as directors for the entire year.

The Trustees continued to meet regularly in person and by telephone, sometimes joined by the management team. Members were invited to three open review meetings and these were well attended. The AGM was held on October 26<sup>th</sup> 2002.

### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES AND REVIEW OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

Last year Prison Dialogue completed its first seven year cycle with the re-formulation of our vision and strategy. We proposed establishing a formal partnership venture with a whole prison - engaging with people from every level: senior managers; prison officers; non-uniformed staff; prisoners on main location and even those in segregation. Our aims are to provide the skills, processes and personnel to significantly change the culture in the prison; and ensure that the management, communication, decision-making and the myriad of human interactions that occur daily throughout the establishment are undertaken effectively and responsibly, and borne out of respect and dignity.

This year we have faced the reality of trying to achieve our vision in a prison service that is increasingly stretched by having to handle record-breaking population numbers, staffing difficulties, cut-backs and the implementation of a variety of new initiatives. We have continued to learn more about what we will need in ourselves, in Prison Dialogue, in terms of capacity and resource, and in the way that we work with the prison system. We have learned more about what is really needed to be in partnership with a whole establishment, and developed our practices to enable us to do that effectively.

Last year's report ended by naming HMP Blakenhurst as the prison where we intended to place our energy to begin a whole-prison intervention, having won the *Dialogue Facility at HMP Blakenhurst* contract. Unfortunately, this contract was withdrawn when the Deputy Governor, who was our main sponsor there, was promoted to another prison. Despite this set-back we have continued to pursue our vision over these twelve months and our main contract at HMP Blakenhurst has continued to date. In line with our stance of being in partnership with, and supportive of the aims of the prison we changed the structure of our intervention there in October to adapt to the changes in and needs of the prison. For example, this meant designing a communication strategy, to involve the rest of the prison in the conversations that were taking place in the dialogue sessions because we could not get everyone together in the room; addressing issues that were of concern to the management of the prison such as safer custody; and beginning an intervention in the Healthcare Unit. In this last piece of work we have applied our past learning from the outset, by establishing a clear partnership agreement with the

Unit Manager, stating clear aims and outputs, and having a thorough process of documentation and evaluation.

A paper describing this intervention has been accepted for publication by the Prison Service Journal; *“We’ve all come together as one – prisoners, staff and managers”*: *Dialogue as a means of facilitating patient/public involvement and implementing new standards in prison healthcare.*”

We are about to embark on an exciting new project at HMP Dorchester. The Governor there has supported our work over several years since he contracted us to work at HMP Long Lartin. He has a sound understanding of our approach and what we have to bring to the effective running of the establishment. The recent history of the prison involves strained employee relations. Our partnership will focus on uniformed staff, their communication styles and relationships with inmates and management. We are really pleased to be putting our resources into such a receptive environment and one that presents all of the significant challenges and opportunities of a small local prison.

This year we welcomed Dr Sarah Hill as our new project manager. She brings with her significant research experience and this has helped us to focus on clearly documenting and evaluating our work. Mrs Lynda Calter returned to work full-time at HMP Blakenhurst. We miss her but are delighted that she stays actively involved as a member and continues to represent well the view from inside a prison.

Developing capacity and resourcing our work remains our main challenge. A sound group of volunteers and members are crucial to our ability to support the work. Equally, we believe that all who participate, grow and learn from their involvement in Prison Dialogue, and we encourage that through a careful process of involvement and support. This year we need to find the funding for a further full-time person to extend the existing input of staff, volunteers, members and trustees.

The proportion of our income earned from prison contracts (as against grants) has suffered this year, with our withdrawal from HMP Whitemoor, the loss of a key sponsor and the need to establish new sponsors in the face of financial constraints in the prison service. We are concerned to have the right balance between earned income and donations, and we realise that this may involve having greater proof of the value we believe we do offer to the decent running of prisons.

We have been especially appreciative of the on-going funding provided by the Tudor Trust as it has enabled us to stick by our vision and build what we believe we need to achieve it in a difficult climate. The Mulberry Trust also remains a consistent and invaluable support, and will be underwriting the new project at HMP Dorchester. Dialogos continued to support us through the year, providing opportunities for Sarah Hill to attend development programmes in dialogic practice to the value of £2,000. In April, Dialogue Associates informed us of their intention to provide long term sponsorship to Prison Dialogue.