

## PRISON DIALOGUE LIMITED

### TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT - 2005

#### YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2005

This has been another highly significant year for the work of Prison Dialogue. The move the Charity made in the previous year to consolidate all its resources and energies in the whole system project at HMP Dorchester has generated a very high level of collaboration and partnership with the prison's leadership, continuing support from the Area Manager of HM Prison Service, and the extension of the work to a cultural change intervention at HMYOI Portland, also within the South West Area. Throughout the year there has been a consistent dedication to skills transfer, to the development of replicable and purchasable re-settlement models, and to the Charity's intention that the work should become entirely self-sustaining.

As Sarah Hill reported in her year-end submission to the Tudor Trust, as part of this development the Governors in both prisons have requested Prison Dialogue's support for reciprocal coaching between their staff, building on their existing mentoring relationship. Prison officers from HMYOI Portland have already participated in staff development sessions run at HMP Dorchester. The Heads of Residence in both establishments have now agreed to pursue opportunities for mutual learning and skill development that reciprocal coaching will enable.

The activities of the year have been extensively documented and evaluated as part of the Charity's routine submissions to its principal funding bodies, which are available to members wishing to have more detail.

These include monthly staff/manager dialogues, monthly resettlement focused prisoner/staff/manager dialogues, introduction of wing forums throughout the prison, contribution to the development and implementation of the prison's People Strategy (part of Performance Improvement Planning), coaching sessions for the Governor and Senior Management Team at Dorchester both face to face and off-line, away-days for HMP Dorchester's Senior Management Team and staff focused on leadership development and change management.

There have been many achievements during the year. Principal among these in our view as trustees has been the extent to which dialogic practices and principles are being integrated into the way business is done at the two host prisons. HMP Dorchester's Establishment Improvement Plan names their vision for dialogue to be an established part of the way they do business and is now regarded as fundamental in enabling the prison to be at the forefront of innovation.

We would wish to highlight three others:

The first is contained in form of a Contract drawn up in August 2005 between Prison Dialogue and the leadership of HMP Dorchester, the first of its kind in the history of the charity. It affirms the spirit of partnership which has distinguished the whole initiative from its inception. It is expressive of a level of resolve and commitment from both parties which has been a source of continual encouragement to everyone involved when progress has seemed slow. As a document, it is succinct, very specific on the nature and scope of that commitment, and above all confirming of the accountability for the initiative held at Senior Management Team Level. This goes beyond support for the Charity to an entirely integrated position where the work is owned by the prison and *supported* by Prison Dialogue. Significantly also for the Charity, the leadership of the prison have undertaken to engage senior level personnel in criminal justice and community agencies to ensure their sponsorship/involvement and enable Prison Dialogue to gain access to front-line practitioners with a view to their participating in the threshold prison and community dialogues planned for early 2006.

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The second derives from the testimony of Steve Holland himself, the Governor at HMP Dorchester. In a recent Impact Report, he confirms that "staff are now accepting of prisoner forums after Sarah and her colleagues have spent time coaching and supporting them. Middle managers are benefiting from the one to one work she has done with them over the period of a couple of years and this year we are beginning to see the results". He makes very clear in his report that the prison has come from a place only a few years ago where the culture of the prison had led to every new initiative being met with opposition and had been described by the Chief Inspector of Prisons as the worst he had come across. It is in that context, that we have to understand the significance of the tribute he goes on to make:

" Many of the initiatives which will in time transform Dorchester from the warehouse for offenders that it once was to the vibrant community prison it aspires to become are being generated by the very staff who were so denigrated five years ago. Prison Dialogue has been hugely influential in shaping and supporting this cultural change."

He concludes with the following paragraph which we feel should also find its place in this report.

"Prisons are notoriously difficult places to work. The routines which shape our daily lives are frustratingly inflexible and can prevent creativity and innovation. Sarah has proved to be extremely pragmatic and resilient in working in that environment. She is fully accepted in the prison and as a consequence has achieved more than I would have thought possible. Sometimes it feels like wading through treacle but when we take time to review progress we realise just how far we have come."

Many people from the Prison Dialogue have contributed to the progress made this year, but we welcome this very fulsome appreciation in particular for the quality of work and dedication that Sarah Hill has brought to the project as its director.

Testimony to the work has also come from David Bourne, Head of Residence at HMYOI Portland. In a letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October of this year, he speaks of involvement with Prison dialogue as having been a very positive experience with what he anticipates as "much more to come as the project continues and matures". That is an impression we too have gained as trustees: that we have been privileged to have had oversight of the maturing of an idea whose time does indeed seem to have come. David opens his letter by explaining that he had first encountered the work of Prison Dialogue when he joined one of the newly formed Prisoner/Wing Staff dialogue groups at HMP Dorchester. As he writes:

"I had felt for some time that the potential to truly reform the experience of both Prisoners and Prison Staff would most probably come from some bold personal acts rather than via Acts of Parliament or Prison Service PSO's. In short, my belief that progress in any establishment would come via brave moments of shared humanity appeared to be being put to the test in this small dialogue group of no more than 20 people."

We believe we have been witness to many brave moments of shared humanity this year. But this is a year too when the Charity has made a number of moves to develop its research base, and put measures in place to evaluate the work from a number of perhaps more objective criteria. HMYOI Portland are to evaluate the process developing there with a

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regular process for benchmarking and end-appraisal, run by their own Head of Research and Development. The Threshold Prison and Community Dialogues are to be evaluated by Professor Karen Ross, Professor in Mass Communication at Coventry University.

The Charity's work this year has continued to be supported by a significant grant from the Tudor Trust which has funded the salary and expenses of Sarah Hill in her own ongoing development in Prison Dialogue's dialogic practice model. This is supported in turn by Dialogue Associates who have continued to underwrite Prison Dialogue most substantially across the full range of the charities needs from core operational functions and practical resources to staff development, consulting and intellectual property. In addition, new grants from Dorset Local Criminal Justice Board, the Network for Social Change and the J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust have enabled the Charity to recruit a new local Senior Project Worker, Vince Miller, who we welcome on an 18 month contract (July 2005 to January 2007). The Mulberry Trust continues in its funding support for core operational costs, and HMP Dorchester and HMYOI Portland are covering some local office and admin costs, travel and subsistence expenses.

Looking ahead to 2006, as Sarah indicates in her recent progress report to the Tudor Trust, the Charity will seek out new funding streams to reflect PD's new youth and race-related work. We will continue to work with the Dorset Local Criminal Justice Board agencies to explore seconding their practitioners to work with PD, who we believe will benefit from integrating their learning back into their original workplace. And we continue to anticipate that with the present development in the profile of the Charity's work, the National Offender Management Service itself could be a legitimate longer term source of funding for the initiatives in Dorset and beyond.

**November 2006**

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**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT** *(continued)*  
**YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2005**

**TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity at the end of the year and of the incoming and outgoing resources for the year then ended.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently, making judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent. The trustees must also prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue its activities.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**SMALL COMPANY PROVISIONS**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part VII of the Companies Act 1985.

Signed on behalf of the trustees

D Brown  
Secretary

Approved by the trustees on .....