

## **Prison Dialogue Annual Report 2014**

### **Overview**

This 21<sup>st</sup> year has been one of substantial growth for Prison Dialogue in terms of the development of knowledge, practice and influence. There has been a broad increase in the range and depth of work internationally, with services provided to the Department of Juvenile Justice in Virginia, and the Departments of Corrections in both Virginia and Massachusetts. Further interest and funding came from the Washington DC-based National Institute of Corrections, and the Ministry of Justice in the UK commissioned research work from us for the first time. At grass roots level we continued to engage staff and offenders in UK prisons, and included a further prison in our regular activities, whilst in the US we worked in maximum, medium and low security prisons as well as accepting a third intake to the VA DOC Dialogue Practitioner Development Programme (that now has 100 operational Practitioners). We were also active in the Community in the UK and the US involving a wide range of agencies in integrated offender-related activities. We had a good press article on our community work, and we published a 50 page booklet entitled 'Dialogue in Action'. This impressive range of work has been achieved by PD Associates and their development of capacity within the organisations involved.

### **Realising the Vision**

The Charity's vision is to encourage *the international use of Dialogue to integrate and humanise society in and out of prison, thereby ensuring successful journeys for offenders from arrest to resettlement, and fulfilling careers for staff in the criminal justice system*. To achieve its vision, the charity formed the Prison Dialogue Council that is charged with developing and disseminating the work, and has Associates (both corporate and individual) who deliver work within the criminal justice system internationally. This allows Prison Dialogue to remain a small organisation with a clear focus whilst enabling the widest range of participation and contracting by the Associates, as evidenced in this report. The Prison Dialogue Council tracks progress in three main areas – the Practice Hub, the Knowledge Hub and the Key Conversations Hub.

### **Practice Hub**

The Associate Programme was designed in 2013, and current Corporate Associates are the Bridgend County Borough Council, Caspica, Dialogue Associates and Eagle Consultants. Highlights of their work during 2014 include:

A Threshold Dialogue initiative (see [www.prisondialogue.org](http://www.prisondialogue.org) for the Case Studies on Threshold Dialogue) initiated by Bridgend Council in response to changing legislation that will remove automatic housing provision for ex-offenders in Wales. There are eight partnering agencies plus the Welsh Government.

An opportunity to provide a version of the charity's Dialogue Skills Training to prisoners in the UK by running courses on behalf of established education training providers is being researched by Liz Leigh of Caspica.

The 'Dialogue in Action – Serving the Commonwealth of Virginia' booklet published in Dec'14 opens with the following description of work undertaken there to date by Dialogue Associates: *At the invitation of the Director of Virginia Department of Corrections (VA DOC) Harold Clarke, Dialogue Associates have spent the past three years developing Dialogue across the Department of Corrections in support of his vision of creating a 'Healing Environment'. During 2012 and 2013, Peter Garrett and Jane Ball met on a quarterly basis with the agency's Extended Leadership Team, including the Unit Heads and Assistants & Deputies of all Facilities, Community Districts and state-wide functions. As well as teaching specific Dialogue Skills for engagement and thinking together, they tasked Unit Heads with developing Healing Environment Initiatives and introduced the concept that supporting successful 'Offender Resettlement Journeys' is the primary function of the Department of Corrections. They established a Dialogue Practitioner Development Programme (DPDP) which has resulted in substantial internal capacity for Dialogue Skills Training (DST), Dialogic Coaching Training (DCT) and organizational intervention work, including the Offender Resettlement Journey initiatives (ORJs). The current phase involves using Dialogue to help establish Learning Teams in all Units across the Department before the end of 2016 in support of creating a Learning Organisation. The posters they have designed can be seen in every Unit in the State, and the practice of Dialogue has clearly taken root broadly. Throughout this time Peter has been writing regular articles for Around Corrections covering all elements of the Dialogue work.* The Urban Institute is tracking the Healing Environment transformational work in the VA DOC (funded by the National Institute of Corrections), including the Dialogue work, and results of their third survey will be published in 2015. Peter and Jane of Dialogue Associates have also worked with the leadership of Juvenile Justice in Virginia, and the top 40 Executives in the Department of Corrections in Massachusetts.

In the UK, grass roots prisoner and staff Dialogues continue into their fifth year at HMP & YOI Portland (meeting fortnightly) with the support of Terry Morgan of Eagle Consultants. The collaborative style has been taken up under the prison's new Governor in a bi-monthly Dialogue with his Senior Management Team. The departing Governor moved to HMP & YOI Brinsford where has started Dialogues with his Senior Management Team, and also prisoner and staff Dialogues on residential wings, with ongoing support from Terry. These are in response to the challenge of turning around a failing prison whilst also implementing the dramatic changes required by the National Offender Management Service's 'New Way'.

An individual Associate is pioneering a unique Dialogic approach to addressing gang violence in a maximum security prison in the US with Prison Dialogue support.

### **Knowledge Hub**

Case Studies, published articles and a series of videos are publicly available on the Prison Dialogue website. Secure areas hold further unpublished materials for organisations being supported by PD Associates. During 2014 significant new material was added including the Dialogic Coaching Training (one-day course covering disciplining, holding to account, coaching and Dialogue aimed at transforming organisational culture and developing staff), the Offender Resettlement Journey (one-year programme tracking the journey of offenders through a prison or community in order to align and integrate services and make material changes to improve the offender's resettlement) and a strategy for a state-wide correctional

cultural transformation through Dialogue (a six-year cascaded model from the executive, through all staffing levels, prisoners and through to offenders under supervision in the community).

*Research:* Prison Dialogue advocates Dialogue as a research methodology to find the authentic voice of those who are impacted by organisational changes and that are otherwise excluded from influencing the design process. We were pleased to provide this service to the UK Ministry of Justice in support of their Transforming Rehabilitation commissioning process. We dialogued with 129 male and female prisoners in four different prisons and our resulting report, including original graphic, quotes and commentary was recommended reading by the MoJ for companies bidding to become community rehabilitation providers.

### **Key Conversations Hub**

Whilst attention has been on the Practice and Knowledge Hubs during 2014, we are well aware of the latent potential of Key Conversations. During the year Council Member Chris Innes wrote his book 'Healing Corrections' (due for publication in June'15) that will provide a platform for us to think with other stakeholders and identify the big political, policy and strategic questions and answers that will steer the future of corrections.

### **Financial Position**

The Charity is in a healthy financial position and services will continue to be delivered by our Associates.

### **Staffing:**

Peter Garrett continues as Director and Jane Ball Programme Director, Catherine Smith Administrator and Company Secretary, and Pippa Toms Accounts Manager. Chris Marks, Mark Seneschall and Jenny Garrett, the Charity's Board of Trustees, have been joined by Terry Morgan.

Many thanks to all involved over the past year supporting the Charity in developing our Dialogic work in the criminal justice system in the UK and USA.