

Prison Dialogue
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
2015

REALISING THE VISION

Prison Dialogue's vision remains unchanged, namely: *'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'*. We remain a small not-for-profit charity, but from our humble beginnings in a single UK prison in 1993, we have retained our grass-roots activity in the UK whilst hugely extending our reach. We now affect over 10,000 correctional employees directly, and indirectly the journeys of over 100,000 offenders internationally. This is cause for real celebration!

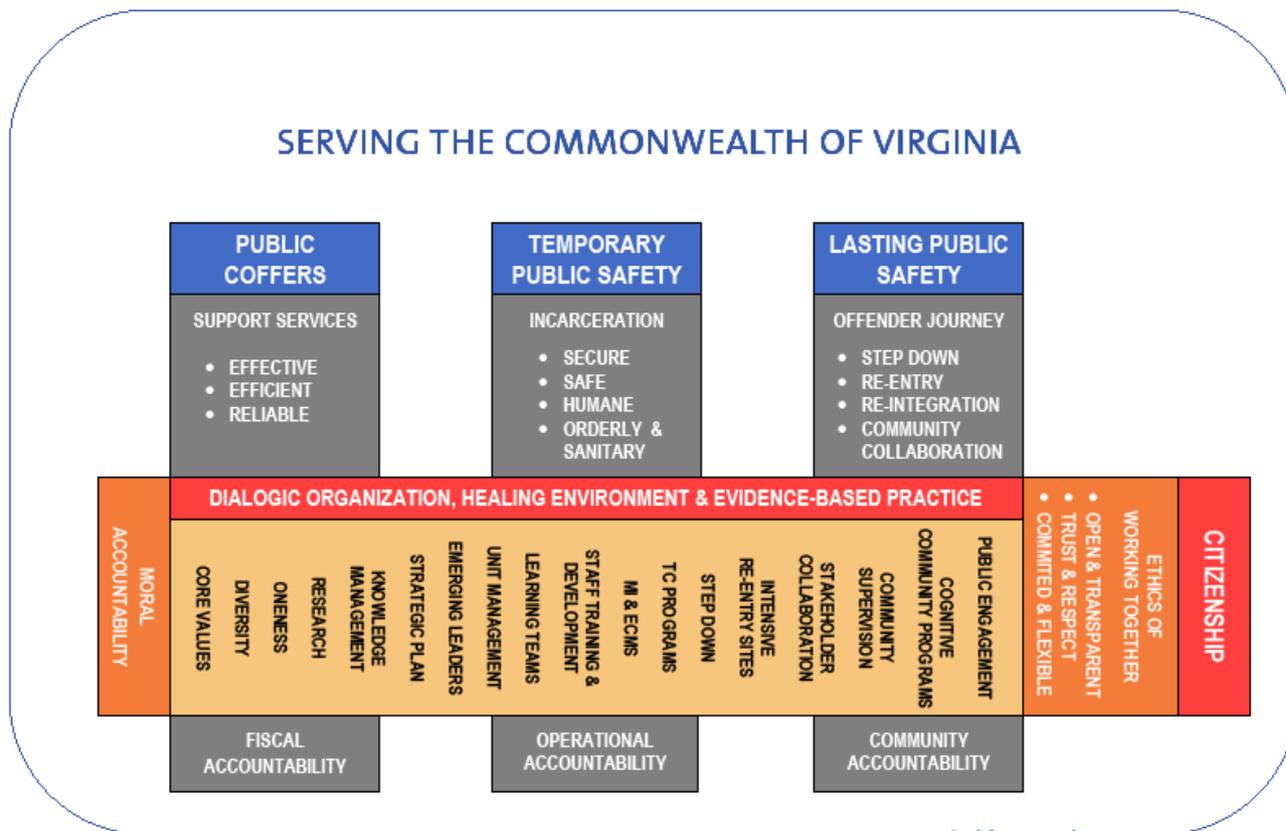
To achieve this progress we have had to deepen our knowledge and practical expertise of the integrating and humanizing value of Dialogue. It has also required huge commitment and ingenuity to engage and partner with a monolithic international industry that (apart from a few outstanding exceptions) largely lacks funding, vision and imagination. We are now challenging ourselves to broaden the scope of our work by making it more accessible and sustainable, and, as we enter 2016, we are exploring new ways to go forward by purposefully revisiting our strategy.

Some years back we identified three key functions, *Knowledge, Practice* and *Key Conversations*, and the main body of this report is organized in this way.

KNOWLEDGE HUB

There is access to our 'Corpus of Knowledge' through our regularly updated web site <http://www.prisondialogue.org> that has a series of video monologues describing our work and offering support to those interested in developing Dialogue in their correctional workplace. It also reproduces our first 41 Case studies (1993 to 2013), and an archive of resources from these interventions. People can also reference an excellent series of articles that we authored for 'Around Corrections' (the Virginia DOC internal magazine) and other writings including 'Remarks on the Purpose of Dialogue' where Peter Garrett gives an overview of the unfolding purpose of Dialogue over the past 30 years. Our new hard copy publication is the booklet 'Dialogue in Action'. Of particular note is the publication of 'Healing Corrections' by Chris Innes (Northeastern University Press) featuring our work in Virginia, including interviews with Peter Garrett and Jane Ball, and advocating Dialogue as the way forward for corrections. Chris Innes was Chief of Research and Information Services at the US Government's National Institute of Corrections until 2014 and he is extremely well informed about the successes and failures of the US correctional system and what has been tried over the years. See his website for regular updates: www.healingcorrections.org

Significant recent knowledge development addresses the relationship between Dialogue, accountability and the leadership of change. This is important because it directly impacts operational thinking in corrections. We have designed an Accountability Progression (from *reactive Disciplining* and *Holding-to-Account*, to *proactive Coaching* and *Dialogue*) which is the basis of a one-day training that has already been delivered to over 1,100 prison executives and supervisors. We have also distilled an archetypal model of Systemic Accountability, relevant to all prisons and correctional systems, defining just four essential accountabilities: *Fiscal, Operational, Community* and *Moral*. This is widely circulated in Virginia as a poster entitled *Serving the Commonwealth of Virginia* and an article with the same title was published in 'Around Corrections' to explain the



relevance to all of the staff in the Department. See the article on: www.prisondialogue.org/research/publishedarticles/VADOC'AroundCorrections'Articles

A further development is worth noting. Our cultural change work is based on our *Implicate Change* pattern that starts with three phases: *Identify*, *Name* and *Discover*. We are increasingly aware that this is, in itself, a participatory research methodology, and we have begun conversations with a UK university to explore formalising this for more general use by under and post graduate students.

PRACTICE HUB

We have opted to develop Dialogue capacity within the Criminal Justice System itself rather than developing a large PD organisation. We achieve this through PD Associates who build engagement, communication, relationship and leadership skills in the systems they work in, as they create Dialogic forums that lead and support cultural change interventions.

This is no easy endeavour, as anyone who has tried it will have found, and working productively on a sustained basis in prisons is our greatest challenge internationally. There are three key reasons for this. Firstly funding is sparse, with correctional budgets repeatedly being cut and the general assumption by grant funders that they should be slow to pick up the responsibility of governments. Secondly, given limited resources, there is a pre-occupation with managing operations which distracts staff from their primary role of public safety and rehabilitation. And thirdly access, which is rightly restricted for security reasons, proves especially difficult for work on cultural change

unless you have first established the credibility to improve operations. These factors inhibit everyone wanting to work in this field, including researchers. Despite this we have sustained and developed important work in prisons and community corrections.

North America

This year Dialogue Associates (DA) completed its fourth consecutive year partnering with the Virginia Department of Corrections (VA DOC), and completed the first year of a new contract working with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (VA DJJ).

Virginia Department of Corrections: DA continue their work with a six-year state-wide cultural change strategy for VA DOC (which began in 2012) by coaching, consulting, teaching, delivering sessions and providing organisational development support. The top/down approach began with the Director, his Deputies and Executive Team and, with Dialogue Practitioner help, is continuing to cascade through the whole organization, which is a \$1bn operation that includes 36 prisons and 43 probation districts. First we built a sound foundation of Dialogue Skills (with every employee participating in a one-day Dialogue Skills Training) and used our set of eight Dialogue Learning Plans to establish ongoing Learning Teams in every Unit for all employees (to raise professional skills and teamwork). This year the focus has been the use of those skills and forums for coaching. We have led one-day Dialogic Coaching Trainings with the Executive and their top 1,100 leaders and middle managers, and the agency's new *Emerging Leaders Initiative* will take this to all supervisors in the coming year. The sessions have provided further training for many of the Dialogue Practitioners who progress from Dialogue Practitioner Trainers (DPTs), to Coaches (DPCs) and on to Leads (DPLs) over several years. We initiated this Dialogue Practitioner Development Programme in late 2012, and it now has over 100 Practitioners. Prison Dialogue provides the quality reference for fidelity and is part of the accreditation authority for Dialogue Practitioners. The three 'Offender Resettlement Journey' pilots begun in 2014 are about to be assessed with the intention of adapting these to enable shorter re-active and pro-active interventions across the Department. The Urban Institute, an independent third party research body, continues to positively monitor progress and we look forward to hearing the 2016 results.

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice: DA is helping with the transformation of what was an intentionally punitive system into one with a therapeutic ethos. This involves the introduction of a *residential community model* derived from work in Louisiana and Missouri, with support from the Annie Casey Foundation. We are providing Dialogic engagement and communication skills, which are inherently compatible with the therapeutic approach, and are being incorporated into all training programs in the agency, along with the enabling cultural change consulting, materials, facilitation and coaching. All Juvenile Correctional Officers (JCOs) who work directly with offenders have been invited to apply for new roles, with different job descriptions as Residential Specialists (RS1s or RS2s) or Community Managers. Proposals for purpose-built housing units are included in the Governor's state budget proposal that is currently under consideration. This really is transformational work, led by a brave leader and leadership team, and we are fully committed to their success.

Gang Intervention work in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections (MA DOC): One of our Associates, who is a former Deputy Director, has begun pioneering work in the MA DOC engaging members and leaders of the four main gangs incarcerated in the maximum-security prison there in order to reduce gang violence in the community. As a lone practitioner in that system he is facing all three challenges outlined at the start of this Practice Hub section.

Europe

UK:

Going forward there will be a review of the UK picture and how to best engage the system (through the MOJ, NOMS or prisons directly), what lessons have we learnt, what capacity issues we have, how we respond to interest, what funding is available and required and if we should we try to expand our reach.

HMP/YOI Portland: Eagle Consulting have led the work in Portland. A bi-monthly Dialogue in the Senior Management Team has continued through a second year, in which the challenge of developing new ways of working in response to leaner staffing levels has been ever-present. In one 2-day SMT off-site meeting, and two 1-day off-site meetings of the Extended Management Team, Dialogue was chosen as the way of thinking and talking together to build a shared view of the future, and commitment to bringing it about.

A fortnightly Dialogue involving prisoners and staff has continued through a fifth year. It became increasingly difficult to draw prisoners from across Wings, due to staff not having the time to unlock and escort prisoners, so we have experimented with forming prisoner groups in other ways. For example, several Dialogues involved prisoners training to be Peer Mentors; other Dialogues have been with prisoners undergoing 'treatments' for various kinds of substance abuse. Dialogue helps these groups to consider different perspectives on the issues/topics they are exploring in the Dialogue, and also helps to strengthen a sense of community. Other uses of Dialogue in the prison are under consideration: for example, working with the challenge of near-to-release prisoners and their families; and training prisoners in Dialogic facilitation.

HMP Brinsford: Activity was limited to one SMT Dialogue, just prior to an HMIP inspection: and a prisoner/officer Dialogue on the use of force, as a contribution to starting to reduce the number and severity of incidents.

Norway:

Flux Foundation approached Prison Dialogue for support starting prisoner/staff Dialogues in Oslo Prison. DA visited Oslo to meet the facilitators, see the prison and provide guidance, and Flux actually later began in Bergen Prison with a group of staff and offenders on a drug treatment unit. Their initial reports are very encouraging.

KEY CONVERSATIONS HUB

The aim of Prison Dialogue's Key Conversations is to convene groupings to engage in Dialogue about the best way forward for the criminal justice system and prisons in particular, including the more widespread use of Dialogue itself.

To this end, Jane Ball and Peter Garrett attended the Association of State Correctional Administrators twice-yearly assembly in Indianapolis in August, along with Harold Clarke (Director of VA DOC) and Chris Innes (Author of *Healing Corrections*). Together they selected the Directors/Commissioners of a number of key states, gathered them in small groupings, presented them with copies of *Healing Corrections* and our *Dialogue in Action* booklet, and engaged them in Dialogue about their and our work. These key conversations continue with Executive staff from Alaska, Colorado, Nebraska, Ohio, Connecticut, New York, and Maryland.

Also, Prison Dialogue launched a series of Seasonal Dialogues. These aimed to gather the experience, know-how and wisdom of those directly involved in cultural change work in prisons, in order to make this available for the future benefit of others.

Spring Seasonal Dialogue, April'15: The title was *HMP Oakwood: Opening a Prison is different from running a prison*, and we focused on the three year period (mid 2010 to mid 2013) from the drafting of the contract bid for the prison, through the first 14 months of operation to the first Prison Inspector's (HMIP) report. Key participants attended with an impressive combined experience - including 7 Senior Prison Managers, 4 Governor/Directors (with experience at 16 different prisons), 2 Area Managers, 1 Director Private Prison Service system, 1 Director National Prison Service system and 3 Consultants. They all had direct interest or involvement in this opening (including DA that was contracted to help set the new culture through Dialogue), and wanted to make their collective wisdom available as a reference for the easier opening of prisons in the future. This was a timely enquiry given that a new prison is due to open in Wrexham in North Wales in 2017. There was much learning from the day collated into a report for participants, which was also made available to the newly appointed leader of Wrexham Prison.

Summer Seasonal Dialogue, July'15: The topic for the Summer Dialogue was *Transforming Culture* and it drew on the experiences of deliberately transforming the culture during the privatisation of HMP Birmingham. It covered the period from the award of the contract to G4S in March 2011 and the handover of the prison in October 2011, through to the present time - captured through four phases: '*Starting Situation & Planning Changes*', '*Mobilising and Transitioning*', '*Transforming*' and '*Sustaining & Innovating*'. The cultural transformation process was designed and facilitated by DA, and required the use of Dialogue to defuse inevitable conflict, and to integrate public and private values and experiences. The enquiry revealed a powerful and successful story of cultural change at the prison in Birmingham over that period. This again was well attended by those directly involved in the work, including academics who tracked the changes.

Autumn Seasonal Dialogue: Our aim is to have a regular seasonal Dialogue in the US, and we used the Autumn to lay the ground for that to occur in the future through our meetings with US Correctional Administrators at the ASCA conference in Indianapolis.

Winter Dialogue: Scheduled for January 18th 2016 in Oxford.

FINANCIAL POSITION AND STAFFING

The financial position of the charity is healthy. Our Associates continue to serve the correctional system worldwide and to deepen our knowledge and practice base. Thank you to all involved in the work over the past year both in Europe and North America, and for your commitment to integrate and humanise the systems you are working in through Dialogue.

Prison Dialogue Trustees and Staff

Chris Marks, Mark Seneschall, Jenny Garrett and Terry Morgan acted as Trustees throughout the year. Peter Garrett continued as Director, Jane Ball as Programme Director and Catherine Smith as Administrator and Company Secretary. Pippa Toms fulfilled her ambition to move to London and has been replaced as Accounts Manager by Bethany Smith.

The Trustees offer special thanks to Steve Holland, who retired from the PD Council this year. We worked with Steve for over fifteen years as he rose through the Prison Service to become governing

Governor of Dorchester, Portland and Oakwood. He used Dialogue throughout and partnered with DA and PD to support the work he was doing. Also, Chris Innes, who retired from NIC in 2014, has also left the PD Council to concentrate on writing for his Healing Corrections website. His recognition, encouragement, writing and support of the work in Virginia have proven invaluable. Both Steve and Chris, in different ways, have made a major contribution to Prison Dialogue and the work we are committed to achieving. We wish them well in their retirement.

Chris Marks, Chair of the Trustees
18th January 2016