

Improving Partnership in the Criminal Justice System across Dorset



An Open Space event
Tuesday 8th June 2010
The Hub, Verwood

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ADHD	Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASSET	Assessment tool used by Youth Offending Teams
BASS	Bail Accommodation Support Service
BCVS	Bournemouth Council for Voluntary Service
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
CJIT	Criminal Justice Integrated Team
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CPO	Community Police Officer
CDRP	Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (now the CSP)
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CVS	Council for Voluntary Service
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Team
DCA	Dorset Community Action
DIP	Drug Interventions Programme
DPT	Dorset Probation Trust
DV	Domestic Violence
ECHO	Empowering Children of Offenders Projects (Barnardos)
EDP	EDP Drug & Alcohol Services
EO	Ex-offender
FIP	Family Intervention Project
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NICE	National Institute for Conductive Education
PACE	PACE Children's Charity
PCVS	Poole Council for Voluntary Service
TAC	Team Around the Child
TCG	Tenants' Consultative Group
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
VIO	Volunteer Involving Organisation
YISP	Youth Intervention Support Panel
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YP	Young people



This is the report of an Open Space event held in The Hub, Verwood on 8th June 2010. The event was commissioned by a multi-agency Steering Group that is currently exploring how to improve partnership working between Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and Statutory Sector agencies in the local Criminal Justice System.

The members of the Steering Group are:

Chris Beale	Chief Executive	Poole CVS
Katy Pascoe	Partnership Officer	Dorset Community Action
Laura Thompson	SW VCS Development Officer	Clinks
Michael Psaradelli	Partnership Development Officer	Dorset Probation Trust
Ruth Shearn	Communications Officer	Bournemouth & Poole CVS
Sarah Woolcock	Partnership Development Officer	Dorset Probation Trust
Vivienne Aird	Chief Executive	Bournemouth CVS

Using the Open Space process delegates created an agenda for the day in relation to the question:

How can we make Dorset safer? What is and what isn't working – and what can we do about it?

28 topics were posted and discussion groups formed around each topic. The topics and the recommendations that emerged from discussion are listed on the following pages. The numbers in brackets reflect the votes assigned to different recommendations by delegates at the end of the meeting; the initials are of those who intend to take action.

▶ Recommendations

Do we have a map (of who is doing what and where?)

Votes

- Online directory of services to meet needs – some work done already, who coordinates? Risks? (18) GC
- Share assessments to avoid duplication. Police – probation – prisons – health etc. (3)
- Build meaningful networks, not just access a database (the who as well as the what) (7) KP@DCA

Voluntary and statutory sectors working together

Votes

- Map resources. Develop database and forum of resources – menu of projects. (13) GC
- Develop joint sector. Practical training and recruitment to develop trust. (1)
- Awareness raising of what each organisation does/can do and what resources it has. (13)
- Support to develop local organisations.



How can we re-establish a sense of 'community' in order to: reduce offending/re-offending, engage with those at risk of offending, support offenders?

Votes

- Opportunities for people to become involved in their communities – less segregation based on age. (11) PH, TMK
- Promote positively what can happen in a community – activities for all – get GOOD PRESS COVERAGE as so much is media led in terms of fear in communities. Show cross-generational activities in positive light.
- Young people involved in 'policing' their own neighbourhood – adopt a 'peer approach' which will show YP in a good light This could be done through youth clubs or groups that feed into the decision making process. There will be the need for YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHAMPIONS. (6) TMK
- Older people asked to work/volunteer in Youth Clubs and young peoples' groups.
- Police Volunteers of ALL AGES.
- Citizenship/Rights Respecting Agendas need to be rolled out into wider community to inform others – Communication – TAKEN SERIOUSLY.
- YOT/YISP – "Be Your Own Judge" initiatives to be rolled out across Dorset – Young people invited into Magistrate's Courts to experience the Criminal Justice System at work and to learn where their responsibilities lie and what can happen to them in terms of the law.
- Support for offenders – Forgiveness/support through RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – community service/community payback.
- Offenders talking to Young people about experiences in prison – link to "Be Your Own Judge" initiative.
- Increased utilisation of COMMUNITY JUSTICE PANELS as they are rolled out over Dorset – a new initiative involving the police and Community Volunteers. This links into the SAFER SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES initiatives – police working in schools and youth clubs – with the work of CPOs (Community Police Officer) being very visible in communities.



We need to develop a CJS Network Pan Dorset

Votes

- Network needs to be developed across all sectors (but with a VCS only sub group.) Need 'on the ground' workers' involvement, but higher level management to make decisions. Priorities: referral systems, gaps in provision, mapping, representation, joint processes. (2) KP@DCA
- Mapping representation: who's representing the VCS sector/offenders, offenders' families - bring together in forum to feed in and give feedback. (1)
- Inter-agency sector communications system needed (using technology)
- VCS CJS Network developed - elect representation at a strategic level (priorities: shared directory, promote compact pan-Dorset, accreditation?) (3)
- Consortium or independent agency to put bid in (pan-Dorset) to employ someone to develop forums, mapping, partnership working - possible CSP bid? (10) GC, KP@DCA

How can we ensure preventative work gets more recognition? Votes

- Organisations should be encouraged to network and share information to strengthen the case for prevention. Can Dorset organisations collaborate in this way? Can they build a county wide network of organisations working within or interested in criminal justice work so they in turn can feed into Community Safety and other partnerships. Grow the voice. (3)
- Increase PR and broaden communication about preventative work showing that it is worthwhile. Promote positive images of how people can be involved. CJ awards locally struggle for nominations. Can a recommendation be taken to the CSP or others to help resource a county-wide network? (9) KP @DCA
- Cost out /quantify the costs and savings that can be made through preventative work. Increase data sharing and use existing networks and organisations to disseminate (even though it may be new for them). (1)
- Find a VCS organisation. (1)
- Encourage funders and commissioners to visit projects and get out of county organisations involved as many offenders in Dorset prisons do not get released back into the county. (2) AD

How can ex-offenders contribute to a safer Dorset? Is there a place at the table for them?

Votes

- Structure release plan for peer to peer mentoring, mentoring for everyone leaving prison. (9) PH, AD
- Ensure a voice at all levels of service. Ex-offenders to play a role in prevention.
- More engagement with ex-offenders by police.
- Building confidence peer to peer support, volunteers and agencies.
- Encourage education after release – community scheme. (2)
- Social enterprise, provide structured release plan.
- Importance of prevention and police involvement in this.
- Meet the victims and mentors for everyone that leaves prison. (1)
- Counselling for offenders whilst in prison. (1) Paul



How do we work together at a Borough & District level to reduce re-offending?

Votes

- Organise probation representation on local TCG or community group. So local agencies are aware of potential re-offenders. (8) TB, MS, MN
- Improve information flow about prison releases between police and partners. (8)
- Determine a threshold for information sharing. Needs to be risk assessed on likelihood of re-offending before sharing information. (2) NM
- Local office base for probation workers.

How can we encourage offenders to continue education on release?

Votes

- Identify who is responsible for final needs assessment within the prison and ensure that ongoing education is always a consideration. (6)
- Improve partnership, information sharing and communication channels within and beyond the criminal justice system and ensure that all relevant education providers are always included.
- Increase mentoring provision for ex-offenders to support them in accessing and continuing with appropriate education on release (amongst other things). (7) AD, SR, BH
- Increase inclusion for young offenders in mainstream education to help reduce the number who go on to offend as adults. (1)



How can peer support be taken into prisons in Dorset?

Votes

- Two key organisations - Self Organised Network Group and Dorset Service User Forum - will get together following this meeting and discuss how they could offer a surgery in Dorchester Prison for prisoners on their first night in custody. (6) PH
- They will then talk with Tim Ellis in HMP Dorchester about how to roll it out in practice and make it happen. (4) Simon DSIF, TE
- They will also aim to offer follow up support through the gate and out into the community for people living in Dorset.
- This will include linking up with other voluntary organisations that can also provide help. (3)

How can we work better with children and families of offenders in order to reduce inter generational offending?

Votes

- FIP, YISP CAMHS, Step Up, etc. (3) NM, GS, AB
- Home Office/ Prisons to identify families and their localities. (6)
- County Councils to identify and have support networks for families.
- Early identification by schools of children who may be at risk due to a parent in prison.
- Continuation of funding for projects to allow for progression.
- ECHO Project (Barnardos Empowering Children of Offenders projects in Devon/Cornwall/Bristol) supporting families and children of offenders. (1)
- Local Police Officers who know families and link with support agencies - Youth Inclusion Support and Task Co-ordinators.
- Housing Providers to identify families who may benefit from referral to support group.
- Childrens Centres/Sure Start Centres working with young mothers/ vulnerable parents.



▶ Recommendations

Housing Issues

Votes

- How can we produce separate wing within prison and more half way houses in the community in North Dorset? (3) SD
- Set up housing forum for offenders and all community agencies. (6) PH, KP

Offenders and volunteering – encourage VIOs (Volunteer Involving Organisations) to use more ex-offenders as volunteers

Votes

- Release plan to include CRB check for VIOs and Employers – CV or certification/pack/testimonial of capabilities/suitability etc. (5)
- Positive case studies (DVDs or in person), bank of successful stories of volunteers or employees who are ex-offenders. Make better use of the Chamber of Commerce to promote this initiative. (3)
- Remove the fear factor of small organisations through education and training by larger statutory organisations.
- Mentored projects do help to reduce re-offending. (1)
- Voluntary work is an excellent route/structure for people to get back into employment. (3)
- Named person for placement organisation to go back to if there is a problem.



Offenders are also victims

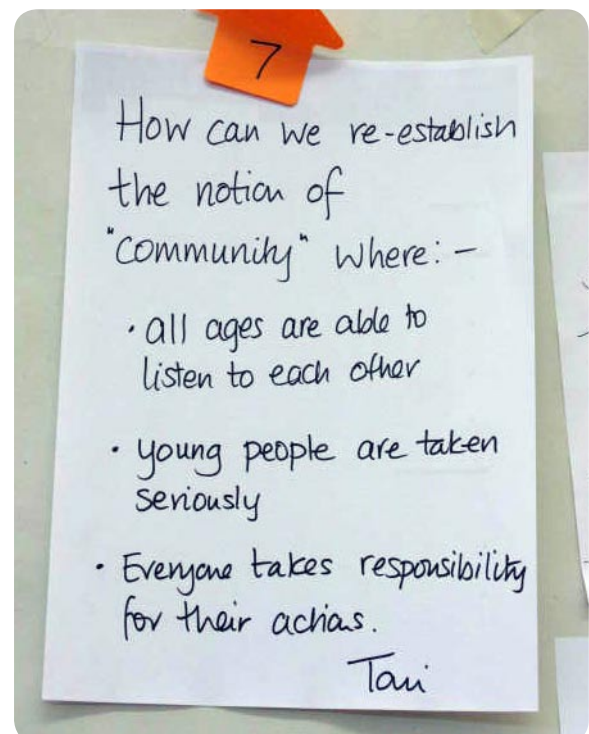
Votes

- Raising victims' awareness of support systems – media promotion. Harsher sentences for first offences. (1)
- Develop self-help groups/ forums for support/awareness of rights and self protection – for family unit, mother, father and siblings. (4)
- Statutory provision of victim support – DV workers and general victims of crime. (1)

How to make things safer to place offenders into work on release. MAPPA information is not always given to agencies willing to consider employment

Votes

- Outside probation to tighten up on issuing MAPPA paperwork to Jobcentre Plus on release. (2)
- Protocols to be agreed between Prisons/Probation/Agencies to share information on all risks regarding employment on release from custody. (2)
- Rules and Regulations on disclosure by responsible authorities i.e. Prison, Police, Probation, should be more transparent and better understood by agencies (4)



How can we make sure that offenders have access to advice such as debt and housing advice which will help prevent re-offending?

Votes

- Let prisoners and prison staff know what advice services are available. This could be through services attending prisoner Induction meetings, full staff meetings as well as information posters in holding areas etc. An idea that the prisons could take forward would be to have a designated TV channel which describes what services are available and when etc. (4) KP, AB
- Important to provide the right sort of services which will meet the needs of prisoners. When providing debt and housing advice also need to look at what can be done to prevent loss of accommodation; how to end a tenancy minimising accrual of rent arrears and preventing prisoners from accruing debts while they are in prison. This is especially important for people who are on remand. (3) KP
- Advice and assistance also needs to be given to the families of offenders. There are issues about accessing families to let them know about what is available and also how practically advice services can be delivered but it needs to be kept on the agenda.

How can we work together to divert women from prison?

Votes

- Roll out 'train the trainers' in Autumn (lead contact Sarah Woolcock, DPT) to enable sex work training to be widely shared across statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Need to develop more women-specific drug and alcohol services - a gap.
- There is already a 30 page directory of services for women offenders (albeit incomplete) that has been developed by Sarah and that could be shared / accessed more widely. This really needs to be on a CJS network / web resource so that all agencies / volunteers can access it.
- ** Probation needs a communication lead to share all this information across County, supported by a 'hub' network serving all sectors. This need run across everything we are talking about today!!
- New women-specific Bail Accommodation Support Service (BASS) will be run by Stonham from July - need to make referral number widely available.
- Spread learning from the 'Think Family' pilot in HMP Dorchester across Dorset, Bournemouth & Poole. But big question about resources for this.
- Need to meet 'softer support' needs of the women who appear in court - court based mentoring** - look for funding. (4)
- Footprints will put leaflets in courts. Links with other mentoring organisations (EDP/Mental Health)? (3) JB
- Build these ideas into DPT's area action plan as part of wider regional Commissioning for Women Strategic Partnership Group.

No topic heading

- All sentences to have an element of statutory supervision.
- Graded system towards release including week end release.
- Engage the public with the end of sentence process.

Votes

(3)
(1)

How can we get ex-offenders to tap into their interests?

- Organisations to make a more active approach to get into prisons; therefore making staff and prisoners more aware of what is available post-release.
- Social inclusion projects should exist within Dorset as this will be a way for ex-offenders to explore different subjects and talents.
- All people who have contact with an ex-offender should build strong and trusting relationships, and take interest in what the ex-offender is interested in. This could build self-esteem, therefore nurturing the talent they possess.

Votes

(3) KM, AD
(2)
(2) AD



Young people with hidden impairments

Votes

- **Communication:** CAF=TAC meetings to be used as should be, statutory services taking up responsibility, co-ordinate access to training. Support with transition to adult services. Accessed when leaving custodial services.
Replacement contact point. Support structure on release. (2)
- **Prevention:** Use tools to screen and prevent. ASSET – how many are referred to M.H. services from this service appear at crisis end. Reshape/review to identify from screening to pathway, through services. ADHD/NICE education in schools on consequences. (1)
- **Disability and equality:** PACE and court process for hidden impairments.

Funding for work in establishments where the establishment cannot afford project/service

Votes

- Tie in with local Community Safety Teams (formerly CDRPs) – identify benefits to local area – resettlement. (1)
- Approach CLINKS for names of external funders (also CVSSs e.g. DCA/PCVS/BCVS) (2) LF
- Involve establishments in working for bids. (1)
- Approach establishments to see if they have Partnership Worker identified (some may have specialisms e.g. Drugs, Alcohol, Homeless) – create working relationships.



How do voluntary and statutory organisations work more closely together and avoid duplication?

Votes

- Directory with details of what work is done by orgs. NOT arranged by pathways but geographical / local – must be kept updated ? CLINKS to organise and manage. (1)
- PAN Dorset approach – difficulties of Poole and Bournemouth being considered as separate to ‘Dorset’ and vice versa. (2)
- County prisons keeping more local prisoners. (2)
- MAPPA – should invite all agencies involved with an individual – including the voluntary sector. (1)
- Information sharing should be less of an issue as most information is necessary for all agencies to be aware of – protocols can easily be in place to enable such – problems are more likely to come from statutory organisations that don’t include voluntary organisations.

How can we improve social inclusion for offenders to reduce re-offending (housing, training, jobs etc.)

Votes

- Prisoners need to take responsibility! May be achieved by inclusion in risk / care / management plans.
- Ex offenders provide a powerful mentoring service. (2) Tim
- Advocate offender inclusion to employers etc.
- Improve risk assessment sharing. (1)
- Person centred plans needed to address personal/cultural need. (1)
- Relationships = inclusion – clubs, hobbies, sports activities. 2)
- Risk assessment sharing is necessary to improve chances of success.
- Local Authorities must support offender reintegration with needs, housing etc. (1)
- Multi generation – community involvement – Government funding exists.



Sustaining long term projects vs short term money focussed projects, which disappear with the funding

Votes

- Forge links/relationships/communications with other agencies.
- Raise awareness of Gatemate and Clinks database/information.
- Develop a national strategy to ensure same/similar level of service for all offenders leaving prisons – will this help equalise the services.
- Linking with other orgs/form board for individual groups/organisations – mapping what is already out there.

(1)

How can services be more integrated ?

Votes

- Cross profession education and awareness of services.
- Ongoing communication between services.
- Network.

(1)

(1)

(1)



How do we make Dorset Safer without duplicating available provision and still meet individual priorities

Votes

- VCS agencies need to be able to voice their priorities on a large stage and not just adhere to the priorities of statutory agencies. (1) GC
- Develop directory of pan Dorset services and add to that any agencies that would welcome the opportunity to be part of a consortium bidding process to strengthen the likelihood of success and reduce the replication of services on small scale that are less likely to be sustained. (1)
- Communication links are very poor across all sectors, these need to be developed to promote partnership working which is cost effective and meets identified need.
- CSP to be more open about it's priorities and funding opportunities, develop a forum at which VCS can present their agency/services and market. (1)
- Marketing – like VCS agencies to help promote other agencies (partners) and for statutory organisations to provide links to VCS agencies who they work with and are aware of. (1)



Housing for Offenders

- Need more independent living skills within prison to help people cope on release.
- More half ways houses in the community to support people into independent living.
- Set up CJIT (Criminal Justice Intergrated Team) /Community housing forums.
- Stronger partnerships with Local DAAT's (Drug and Alcohol Team) and Local Authorities to help re house offenders.



What can we do to stop young victims becoming offenders – attacks/ assaults - becoming part of the group/gang? Offenders get more help – education and training etc. Victims needs not addressed.

- CPS not prosecuting when evidence can be challenged.
- Do young victims get the opportunity to provide victim statements for the courts?
- Elderly victims fearful of coming forward.

How can ex (domestic violence and sex) offenders be effectively resettled in Dorset?

- Voluntary agencies to establish a 'need to know' list for statutory sector concerning individuals in order to develop interventions and risk planning.
- Voluntary agencies to establish clear guidelines for working with individuals, focus on risks and needs.
- Training on working with client group, develop expertise, knowledge and retain limited pool of workers to intervene with these individuals. Coordinator can provide point of contact with MAPPA.
- Information sharing needs to be developed between service providers.





Concluding Remarks

These are some of the comments made by delegates at the end of the meeting:

It has been good to get out of the office for a day and hear people talking about the work they are doing.

A good networking day and an opportunity to understand of what people do.

Practical work was good and I enjoyed the way the day was facilitated.

Thanks to Annette for facilitating. Useful messages have come out of today. It has re-enforced what Clinks are trying to do in the region.

It has been good for the statutory sector to meet up with voluntary and community sector.

I'm very hopeful of getting problems resolved.

Glad we all got a chance to speak about the problems that we face.

It has got me out of my comfort zone - thanks to those people who made me feel welcome.

A very different meeting.

The creativity and ideas of the people made the event very interesting

I hope that individually we can take actions forward.

I've made lots of contacts.

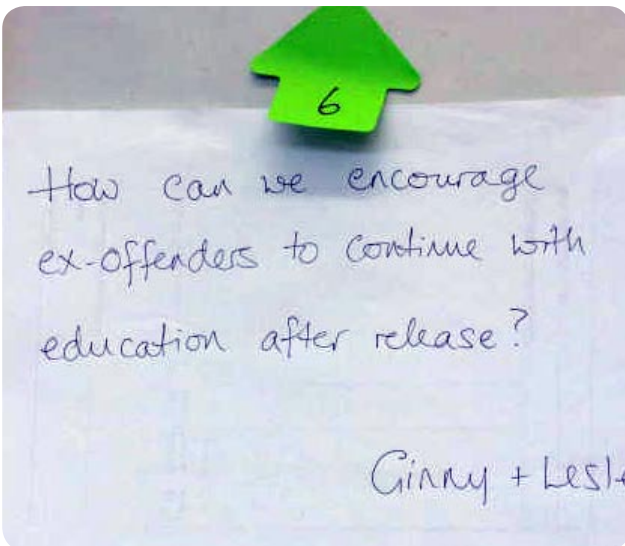
A very informative day.

I'm encouraged to learn how much support there is for offenders.

Let's not just leave it here – we must move it forward.

Chris Beale: One of the undertakings we (the Steering Group) are making is to keep everyone informed of progress following today's event. Capacity is an issue for all of us and so we will be looking for as much help as possible from those of you who have put your initials beside any action points. It is really encouraging that every sector has been well represented here – and those who came have truly been the right people. Thanks go to Lesley, Annette, but especially to Laura for the organisation of this day. And thanks to you all.







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