

Clare Blatchford-Hanna

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To: Clare Blatchford-Hanna
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Dartington

DLW Update 20



Hello

"FTS...Chris man, do you know what that means?". I was asked this, early on, in the first week by one of the guys. I desperately wanted to coolly say yes, but just managed a stumbled "err, I think so". A little to my surprise he pulled down his LandWorks T shirt, jabbing at a Gothic "FTS" tattooed across his breast, explaining as he did so "Chris man it means, F... the system, F... the screws and F... the sentence." Oh yes...of course.

Why mention this now? I'll explain....

After the euphoria of our launch event I have been expecting there to be little bit of a come down, so far it has only been the weather.

So why no come down? The guys would say they got such a lot from the event, they enjoyed chatting, the feeling of being accepted, just being seen as normal and very importantly... they did not feel judged. So strangely euphoria has been replaced by a

new normality and that is just great!

Before and after the launch we have all been discussing prison and serving a sentence. The unanimous consensus is that Prison is not a nice place, it's not a good place, it is a horrible place and for many a desperate place of punishment. So, I have been really taken aback to hear individually, each person's experience where they sight this Prison sentence as being a saviour...by removing them from an impossible existence, stopping the drugs, stopping the pain, stopping the violence and providing a sanctuary of sorts. The problem is this sanctuary of sorts is not really set up to help get people back into community or employment.

Finally to the point...

Today I had a different conversation about FTS... " Chris man I'm thinking of blanking off my FTS tat, 'cause it doesn't really fit with where I am now and I don't think it's helping".

Chris

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