



igen support at HMP Leeds

igen's nextstep adviser is an integral part of the resettlement of prisoners at HMP Leeds. Joanna Watson works within the Offender Management Group as a nextstep adviser to support prisoners on their release to access training. She works in the Offender Management Group within the resettlement team alongside a job search officer, two housing officers and a representative from Shelter.

Joanna's role involves her meeting with prisoners six weeks before their release date to help them find support and training. The prisoners at HMP Leeds come from around the country and as part of the service Joanna will establish links in the prisoner's home area, linking into various support agencies and colleges. She will also work with the agencies including Jobcentre Plus for benefits and refer people to a separate Job Search Officer based at the Prison.

Case Study

Six weeks prior to his release from HMP Leeds, Balbent met with Joanna to discuss education, employment and training options for his release.

While at HMP Leeds, Balbent had completed several courses and workshops and was keen to continue learning in order to increase his career options. He had an interest in counselling and wanted to explore this area further. Joanna looked into local courses which coincided with his release date and found a 'Counselling Course for Beginners' that would start within weeks of his release.

Joanna also discussed the option of volunteering in the community to help build his skills and make the transition back into the community easier.

Following his release Balbent has been accepted onto the counselling course and is progressing well. He is now applying to complete Level 2 of the course in September and also volunteers one day a week with a local support agency that assists people with drug and alcohol issues.

The service provided by igen's nextstep adviser at HMP Leeds compliments the support from the Job Search Officer and the housing support available to ensure prisoners have a successful transition back into the community.