

Pioneering charity helps 150 ex-prisoners to go straight

A PIONEERING charity serving Leeds and Kirklees has within one year helped 150 ex-prisoners 'go straight' has celebrated its anniversary.

West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project celebrates its first anniversary with a mixture of speeches, drama, music and dance presentations.

The project was set up to help prisoners to break out of the cycle of re-offending.

The multi-faith project now employs two community chaplains, one Christian and one Muslim – whose role is to provide a bridge for prisoners to access support – together with dedicated experts in various fields including housing, employment and substance misuse, who have close links into a wide multi-faith support networks.

Backing up the work the project has a team of 26 volunteers who mentor ex-prisoners and provide one-to-one support.

The official launch event heard how between April and December 2006 the project helped more than 150 ex-prisoners – 87 per cent with accommodation help, 38 per cent with to access training and employment, and 30 per cent with issues of substance misuse.