

ACCESS, INFLUENCE AND EMBRACE: PENAL REFORM ORGANISATIONS AND THE BIG SOCIETY

Stephen Shaw

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, 1999-2010

ESRC Seminar Series – The Third Sector in Criminal
Justice. Seminar 3: Penal Reform and Service Provision

Birmingham, September 2011

My credentials ...

- Thirty years' experience of monitoring prisons and other parts of criminal justice system
- Twenty years' experience as a professional campaigner
- Ten years' experience as a state employee investigating complaints and deaths of people in Prison Service custody

“The success of the tours, allied to the planned programme of work which is due to commence early in the New Year, is to be welcomed and will play a major part in regeneration of the area.”

Martin McGuinness, Deputy First Minister, Northern Ireland

“Ministers extend Crumlin Road Gaol tours due to popular demand.”

Northern Ireland Executive, News Release, 30
September 2009

The Big Society and the penal landscape

- The shrinking of the state
- A multiplicity of service providers
- Localism and volunteerism
- Rehabilitation and resettlement: accommodation and employment schemes, tackling substance abuse
- Mentoring and circles of support
- Partnerships with the private sector

What pressure groups want

- Access
- Influence
- Growth
- £s
- Credibility
- Respectability
- Purity

Challenges and contradictions

- The potential for capture
- Core services or those at the margin?
- What is the core?
- Is the private sector more or less benign than the state?

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