

Willmott Dixon launches fourth prison Drylining Academy

3 years ago



[Willmott Dixon](#) has launched its first Midlands-based Drylining Academy at HMP Lincoln, which aims to upskill prisoners to help them find employment upon release.

Working alongside some of its local supply chain partners, Willmott Dixon has facilitated and launched the academy, with the first cohort of learners finishing this month. The programme is designed to help ex-offenders develop their skills and get 'work ready', ultimately helping them find employment upon release. Groups of up to eight prisoners will go through the academy to learn drylining skills and get their Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card, which will enable them to work on construction sites.

As the fourth Drylining Academy launched by Willmott Dixon, having seen success at HMP Elmley, HMP Belmarsh and HMP Cardiff, it is hoped that the scheme will reduce the likelihood of reoffending within the Lincolnshire community.

Nick Heath, director at Willmott Dixon, said:

"We are incredibly proud to be launching our first Drylining Academy here in the Midlands at HMP Lincoln. Willmott Dixon is committed to providing opportunities within the communities we work in, and with our remit in the county growing at pace, our newest academy is very much aimed at delivering on this promise within Lincolnshire.

"There is a real skills shortage within the construction industry and the academy not only offers huge benefits to ex-offenders by equipping them with the skills required to transition into a rewarding job once their sentence has come to term, but it also boosts the local talent pool with skilled workers. We're really pleased that this first cohort will be completing their training soon, and the academy is already proving to

be a success with some of them already in talks with some of our supply chain about job opportunities upon their release.”

On 11 May, key stakeholders and the current cohort of learners gathered to celebrate the official opening of the academy.

Hear from current cohort, HMP Lincoln’s Governor and the Willmott Dixon team about the positive impact this academy will have on the lives of ex-offenders:

A prisoner at HMP Lincoln, said: “The programme has given me knowledge as to what I could do [when I’m released], and how it could lead to a job, really. It will help me to not go back to being the same person I was before.

“My favourite bit of the programme has been building something and looking back and knowing that you’ve done it – the satisfaction of doing something.”

Matt Spencer, governor at HMP Lincoln, said: “The partnership between Willmott Dixon, HMP Lincoln and the supply chain is a great example of the quality vocational training HMP Lincoln wants to provide to its prisoners. With this vocational training HMP Lincoln prisoners have a much better chance of getting a job on release and this means they are much less likely to reoffend which therefore ensuring the public is protected in the future.”

After completing the course, individuals will be supported by Willmott Dixon and its supply chain partners in finding employment.

The academy would not be possible without the generous donations of money, time and tools from Willmott Dixon’s supply chain partners. In particular, the support provided by Advante, British Gypsum, Elmsmere, Nuneaton Signs, We Are Social Enterprise and Lincsko.