

PROBATION News

Magazine of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland • Issue 6 June 2017



Earlier this year a range of leaders including the permanent secretary of the Department of Justice Nick Perry and the lord Chief Justice Sir Declan Morgan addressed a Probation seminar.

All paid tribute to the outstanding work of Probation, and the Lord Chief Justice highlighted the significant contribution that Probation has made to the development of new problem solving approaches to justice.

He said: "If we are serious about addressing the problems that are causing most harm to our society, we have to recognise the need to get the right people to provide the right support at the right time." He emphasised that Probation will have a key part to play in making that happen. Inside this edition of Probation News you will see a range of initiatives aimed at tackling the causes of crime and preventing reoffending.

WELCOME to the Sixth edition of the Probation News Magazine. This magazine provides a biannual opportunity to engage through sharing of news, best practice and information to stakeholders, staff and the public. We hope you enjoy reading this edition.

IN THIS EDITION

Enhanced Combination Order update on progress and an example of its positive effect on offenders
Page 3

Cross Border Focus: Probation takes part in a workshop on Social Innovation and Social Enterprise
Page 5

The Community Service showcase highlights the positive impact of Community service on individuals, communities and the environment
Page 5

Probation contributes to a new book which examines Hate Crime on a cross border basis
Page 7



PBNI
Probation Board
for Northern Ireland



Introduction from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the sixth edition of Probation News. In this edition there is a very definite theme of Probation's role in problem solving justice.

You will read about progress on the Enhanced Combination Order introduced by Probation in October 2015 as an alternative to short prison sentences. To date, 156 individuals who would have received a short prison sentence have instead had an Enhanced Combination Order. An independent evaluation of this pilot conducted by NISRA and due to be published imminently indicates that this is an effective intervention which reduces offending and is cost effective.

This newsletter also provides details on Probation's role in tackling domestic violence. We have a range of bespoke programmes which aim to challenge and change domestic violence perpetrators' behaviours. We have seconded a member of staff to work alongside Women's Aid in Derry City to tackle the issue of young men whose behaviour has the potential to lead to offending.

You will also read about an internal community service showcase event which was recently held to explain how effective community service is in preventing reoffending and enabling offenders to pay back to local communities. We have a number of community service projects running throughout NI and we want to further develop our community service partnerships. A recent partnership with Belfast City Council to tackle graffiti removal is proving successful and we are keen to explore similar projects in other areas.



Belfast City Mayor, Cllr Brian Kingston, getting hands on with Probation's Graffiti Removal scheme

Probation is also working to develop innovative digital technologies. We have developed a mobile phone application 'Changing Lives' for people under supervision. This app provides support and information for people on probation to assist them to tackle the causes of offending. We were recently voted App of the Year in the Digital DNA awards. We are also developing a new case management system and will soon be going out to tender for this project. Alongside our continued use of social media we want to use technology to engage with partners and service users.

Finally we continue to share practice and learning with colleagues throughout these islands. We work closely with Probation colleagues in the Republic of Ireland and you can read about collaborative work we are undertaking in regard to social enterprise. We have also visited colleagues in England and Scotland to explore initiatives to tackle violent offending. This cross border co-operation and collaboration is vital.

The first five nation teleconference of the Heads of Probation and Criminal Justice Social Work in Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland took place recently. This has been established to promote sharing of good practice.

I hope you find this magazine useful and informative. Please feel free to contact me if you would like any further information about any of the projects in this edition.

Cheryl Lamont
Chief Executive



Welcome from the Chairman

At the end of March the Probation Board held a seminar entitled 'Probation Works' which brought together a range of partners and stakeholders to begin a new conversation about how best to reduce re-offending and prevent people becoming victims of crime. It was also an opportunity for us to consider what contributes to community safety and how we can individually and collectively work more effectively towards building safer communities. It was clear from the contributions throughout the seminar that probation has a key role in tackling the causes of crime and rehabilitating individuals so that they can be responsible and productive citizens.



L-r: Cheryl Lamont, Chief Executive, PBNI; Donna Traynor, Comperre for event; Prof. Monica McWilliams, Ulster University; Lord Chief Justice Sir Declan Morgan; Vilma Patterson, Chairman, PBNI; Nick Perry, Permanent Secretary, DoJ

Since March our conversations with partners and stakeholders have continued and I am delighted that this newsletter provides an opportunity for people to read more about Probation's role in communities, in prison and working with victims of crime. An area where once again Probation is leading in innovation is the Problem Solving approach to justice. Probation's Head of Psychology Services and Interventions, Dr Geraldine O'Hare, recently presented to the Board on Probation led problem solving approaches to domestic abuse and these initiatives are detailed in this magazine.

March should have also seen the publication of the Probation Board's Corporate Plan for 2017-20 however due to the current political issues the Corporate Plan could not be formally launched but is available in draft on the website www.pbni.org.uk. That will not prevent Probation from pushing forward with innovative projects and practice to deliver rehabilitation and resettlement. Indeed the consultation process for the Corporate Plan provided some important feedback and the responses indicated the high regard in which Probation is held and the value placed on the services it delivers. The Corporate Plan links directly to the outcomes in the draft Programme for Government around community safety. It is our hope that the NI Executive and Assembly are restored quickly so that the final Programme for Government can be agreed and implemented.

Within the Corporate Plan there are a number of strategic priorities which can be summed up as:

- Delivering on probation's statutory obligations across the Criminal Justice System.
- Prioritising Service Delivery on perpetrators of crime against vulnerable people.
- Promoting an innovative and problem solving approach to encourage rehabilitation, reduce re-offending and address the issues commonly associated with re-offending behaviour.
- Contributing to the delivery of the NI Executive's Fresh Start Agreement Action Plan.
- Influencing the development and delivery of the public policy on resettlement and rehabilitation.

By adhering to these priorities Probation will continue to deliver an effective and efficient service for all communities in Northern Ireland. The Probation Board is in a strong position for managing in financially challenging times and endeavours to ensure continuation of front line delivery with fewer resources.

Vilma Patterson MBE
Chairman

Enhanced Combination Order Update

In May 2015, the Lord Chief Justice requested that the Probation Board develop a demanding community sentence as an alternative to short prison sentence of less than 12 months. He noted that 88% of prison sentences imposed in Northern Ireland in the previous 12 months had been for one year or less. He also noted that research had demonstrated short prison sentences were ineffective in addressing offending behaviour, given that there was little that could be done in practical terms to rehabilitate offenders during a short prison stay.

Probation therefore piloted the Enhanced Combination Order (ECO), in the Ards and Armagh & South Down Court areas. By the end of May 2017, 156 people have been given an Enhanced Combination Order.

There are several requirements on an offender subject to such an Order, namely to:

- complete unpaid work within local communities at an accelerated pace
- undertake intensive offending focussed work with their Probation Officer
- undergo assessment and, if appropriate, mental health interventions with psychology staff
- complete an accredited programme, if appropriate



Service users on ECO have found it has had a positive impact on their lives

- participate in victim focussed/restorative work
- participate in parenting/family support work (if appropriate)

Mental health intervention has been a focus of the ECO pilot. Many people subject to an ECO have significant mental health problems, as is typical of 'revolving prison door' type offenders. Probation has dedicated additional Probation and Psychology staff to each of the two pilot areas.

Additionally Probation staff have ensured that victims have been central to ECOs. Victim Support NI are represented on the Project Board (which also includes PSNI, DOJ and representatives from the Lord Chief Justice's office). This has led to a new and innovative arrangement through which victims can be contacted by VSNI, so that Probation can advise Sentencers of the victim's views on the potential plan of work under an ECO, and for Probation to work with the offender in a truly victim-centred way.

The ECO pilot has been independently evaluated by NISRA statisticians, with the assistance of the DOJ's Analytical Services Group. The evaluation shows that this order has been very effective to date and notes it has been embraced by the judiciary and partner organisations in NI.

ECO at work

As part of the ECO pilot Probation have established a partnership with the Lyric Theatre, in order to provide communication and self-confidence building skills for participants. Probation knows that many service users have issues communicating effectively, which may have contributed to their offending, and so it was anticipated a course such as this would help achieve behavioural change in participants, and create fewer victims in the future.

A recent event was hosted by Philip Crawford, Creative Learning Co Coordinator and David Lawler, Professional Drama Facilitator at the Lyric Theatre. The focus of the event was 'conscious communication' and how to use this valuable skill effectively to achieve a desired result with participants mainly comprised of ECO service users from both pilot areas. Throughout the day they engaged in various activities centred



Service users take part in a number of exercises to build confidence & communication skills.

around breathing, status, eye contact, body language, voice and performance. As part of the day there was also an opportunity to do role plays which allowed the participants to play out challenging experiences relevant to their lives.

'...really enjoyed the role plays. It made me think about how I speak to other people and what its like to be on the other side' (David)

'really enjoyed it. It has now given me the confidence to speak with Philip about volunteering opportunities' (Martin)

Problem Solving addresses Domestic Violence and Abuse



Probation staff met with Foyle Womens Aid Director Marie Brown to discuss new initiatives on Domestic Abuse

Probation has delivered programme interventions to address Domestic Violence and Abuse for over two decades. Below is an outline of some of the work currently undertaken.

Domestic Violence Court

Probation is working with the DOJ who are leading on a pilot for male perpetrators of domestic abuse in the Derry/Londonderry Domestic Violence Specialist Listings Court. Probation has developed a team of staff who will assess and determine suitability of perpetrators for a treatment programme to be delivered as a diversionary approach, following the principles of a problem-solving court.

Promoting Positive Relationships Programme (PPRP)

Promoting Positive Relationships Programme (PPRP) is an integrated group work programme developed for adult males, who have demonstrated the potential to be abusive in intimate relationships. The principal aims of PPRP are to ensure the safety of women and children and to prevent further abusive behaviour, based on 30 group work sessions. An essential component of PPRP is the role of the Partner Link Worker who supports the partner/former partner of the programme participant. PPRP promotes and requires interagency working and central to this are six-weekly practitioner meetings, where all agencies involved with the participant are invited to meet to discuss any risk issues and progress on PPRP.

Respectful Relationships Intervention (RRI)

Respectful Relationships Intervention (RRI) is designed for adult males who require an educational input regarding healthy relationships. It can be delivered as a group work programme or on an individual basis. The principal aims of RRI are to ensure the safety of women and children and to prevent relationships becoming abusive or preventing further abuse. The role of the Partner Link Worker remains an essential component of RRI and they will offer support to the current partners of men participating in the intervention.

Female Perpetrators and Young Males Programme

At present there are no group work programmes approved for work with female perpetrators or young males and work is carried out currently on an individual basis. However, as part of the ongoing development work within the Programmes Team, Probation are developing an intervention aimed at females who perpetrate domestic abuse and for young people in developing healthy and respectful relationships. Probation has seconded a member of staff to Women's Aid to work on the implementation of a range of programmes and interventions for young people who have witnessed family domestic abuse or who demonstrate propensity to perpetrate domestic abuse.

Cross Border Focus: Social Innovation and Social Enterprise

In June a cross border social innovation and social enterprise themed workshop took place in Blacklion, County Cavan called "Sharing Social Innovation and Social Enterprise across the Border: Best practice in the Justice sectors on the island of Ireland". The workshop was organised by the North-South Social Innovation Network Steering Committee, of which the Irish Probation Service and Probation Board for Northern Ireland are members.

The event was dedicated to the sharing of skills and experiences in the areas of Social Enterprise and Social Innovation within the Criminal Justice sector and comes in the wake of the North-South Social Innovation Conference that took place in the Dundalk Institute of Technology in November 2016 and launched the North-South Social Innovation Network. At that conference there was agreement that there should be more opportunities for cross-border and cross-sectoral collaboration, networking and learning.

This workshop, which was kindly hosted by the Irish Prison Service in Loughan House Open Centre, is contributing to the process of cross-border and cross-sectoral collaboration that the North South Social Innovation Network is supporting. It was aimed at practitioners in the justice system, North and South, voluntary and community sector organisations involved in criminal justice as well as other statutory community, voluntary and academic representatives.



Vivien Geiran, Director Probation Service, Ireland; Cheryl Lamont, Chief Executive, Probation Board for Northern Ireland; Michael Curran, Chair, North South Social Innovation Steering Group; and Anthony Soares, Centre for Cross Border Studies attending the Social Innovation and Social Enterprise held in Blacklion, Co. Cavan.

Discussions at the workshop included Social Enterprise Development in the Justice System and mapping Social Innovation on the island of Ireland and heard about a number of case studies.

Paul Doran, PBNI's Director of Rehabilitation, said of the workshop "This was a great opportunity to meet with colleagues in Justice across both jurisdictions as well as social enterprise innovators. The seminar recognised the importance of training and employment in helping people move away from offending and the opportunities that will arise from taking a social innovation approach to address social needs. It was particularly useful to hear about the new Social Enterprise Strategy launched by the Irish Department of Justice last month".

Community Service Showcase

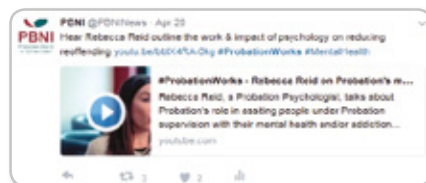
Probation staff were invited to a Community Service Showcase in Probation Headquarters on Wednesday 14 June. This drop-in event demonstrated the success of community service to colleagues across Probation. Community Service is one of the most successful court sentences in terms of preventing re-offending. Three out of four people who complete community service do not re-offend within one year. At the showcase there were videos, photo presentations and practical demonstrations of the work carried out and equipment used to outline the work that goes into and is achieved by Community Service. Community partners were present to talk to about the benefit of community service squads and placements to their organisations and the local community.



Cheryl Lamont, Chief Executive, drops in to see Aisling Reynolds, Community Service Belfast Area manager, at the Community Service Showcase.

Successful Twitter Campaign

Probation ran a Twitter campaign from 30th March to 28th April using the hashtag #ProbationWorks. This campaign lasted four weeks and had a particular theme each week. The four themes used were problem solving, domestic violence, mental health & addictions, and partnership. Some of the highlights from the campaign are below.



Innovation in New Technology recognised

The Changing Lives App, developed by Probation has been awarded App of the Year at the Digital DNA Awards 2017.

The App which was shortlisted from 200 entrants aims to help those on probation move away from criminality. Changing Lives has a journal to capture thoughts, a calendar to help remember appointments, useful information on Probation, advice on mental health/addictions, and an easy to use contacts section. All in one handy app.

Download it from Google play store search for "pbnichanging lives"
 Download from Apple App Store search for "changing lives"

Awards for HR

Gillian Robinson, Probation's Head of Human Resources, has been recognised at the annual CIPD NI Awards with a highly Commended Award in the NI HR Director of the Year category. She was presented with her award by TV personality Pamela Ballantine and Maxine Orr of Worthingtons Solicitors.

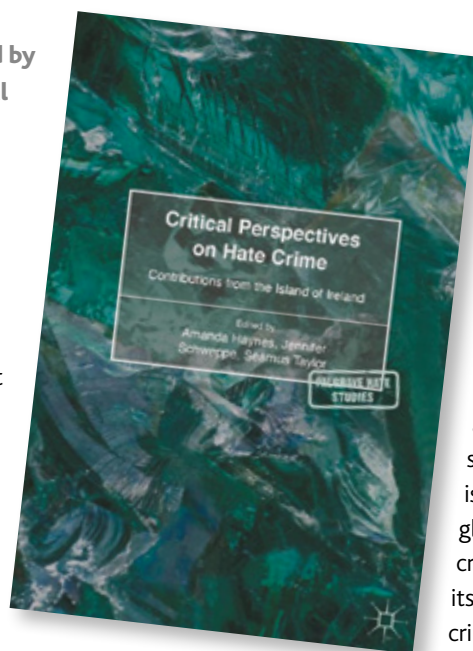


North/South writing on Hate Crime 'Critical Perspectives on Hate Crime'

A new book has just been published by Palgrave Macmillan entitled 'Critical perspectives on Hate Crime'. The book consists of a series of articles written by a range of academics and practitioners and others involved in the area of hate crime.

Eithne McLroy, Assistant Director in Probation and Gerry McNally, Assistant Director in the Irish Probation Service and President of the Confederation of Probation Service co-wrote a chapter entitled 'Probation Practice and Offending Motivated by Hate and Discrimination: An All-Ireland Perspective'. This article explains the work carried out in both probation services to tackle hate crime and change the behaviours of those who carry out such crimes.

Eithne McLroy speaking about the publication stated: "In this article I outline the development of a hate crime policy within Probation and the development of the 'Accepting Differences' Intervention which challenges perpetrators of hate crime.



'Accepting Differences' was a first for Probation and was developed in response to an increase in offences motivated by hate or prejudice. It takes on board international best practice and has been designed for the circumstances of Northern Ireland's strategic response to this issue."

This book provides a unique insight into the realities of hate crime in Ireland and its treatment within the criminal justice system. The significance of the Irish case is contextualised within the European and global policy contexts and an overview of hate crime in Ireland, both north and south, and its differential treatment in each jurisdiction's criminal justice system is offered.

Presenting analyses of the experiences of commonly targeted identity groups in an Irish context, this study also draws upon their exposure to hate crime and challenges encountered in seeking redress. Combining theory, research and practice, this book represents legal, social, cultural and political concerns pertinent to understanding, preventing, deterring and combatting hate crime across Ireland.

The book is published on Palgrave Macmillan.



During **2016/17** PBNI offenders delivered approximately **143,000** hours of unpaid work to the community

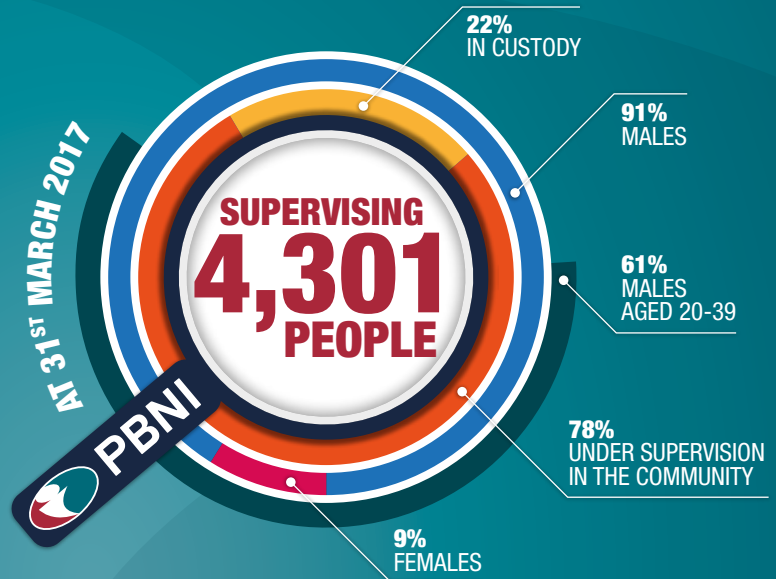


CRIMINAL DAMAGE
is the most common offence committed

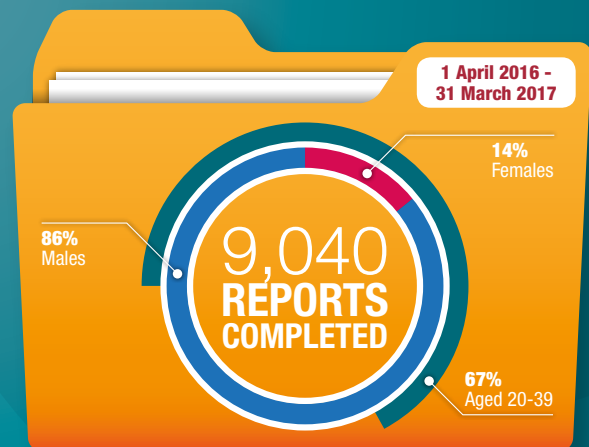
There are approximately **4,300** people on PBNI's caseload



In Northern Ireland, the one year proven **reoffending rate** for adults who were released from custody on **community supervision** was **31%**



Overall, the one year proven **reoffending rate** for adults who were released from custody was **42%**.



1364 victims have been provided a service by the **Victim Information Scheme** since its establishment



of those supervised by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland in the community through a **community disposal** did not go on to reoffend within one year

