

PROBATION News

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Vivian Geiran, Director, Irish Probation Service and Cheryl Lamont, Chief Executive, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, at the Public Protection Advisory Group seminar that took place in Parliament Buildings.

The Public Protection Advisory Group, jointly chaired by the Chief Executive of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Director of the Irish Probation Service, held its annual seminar on 10 November in the Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings.

The theme of the seminar was "Reducing Reoffending – Working across borders and boundaries" and it provided an opportunity

for those working in public protection to enhance collaboration and share learning.

It was a packed event with over 80 attendees from justice, health, voluntary and community, and academia listening and engaging in the discussion on initiatives to reduce offending and reduce the number of victims.

Read more about the event on page 3.

WELCOME to the Seventh 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.

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PBNI
Probation Board
for Northern Ireland



Introduction from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the seventh edition of Probation News. Within this newsletter you will read articles about a range of events that have taken place and new initiatives that are being implemented.

In November we held the annual Public Protection Advisory Group (PPAG) seminar in Parliament Buildings Belfast. This event, attended by leaders and practitioners across criminal justice, provided an opportunity to share experience and expertise and look at how we can work more effectively to reduce reoffending. There were presentations on a range of issues including mental health courts, domestic violence, reducing offending in partnership and the work carried out by probation throughout Europe. Now more than ever it is important that we have a close working relationship with colleagues in the Republic of Ireland to ensure that public protection across borders and boundaries remains a priority.

The PPAG seminar also saw the launch of the fourteenth edition of the Irish Probation Journal. The Irish Probation Journal is an annual publication produced in partnership by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Probation Service in the Republic of Ireland. Its aim is to share theory and practice, increase cross-border cooperation and learning, and develop debate about work with offenders. There are a number of important articles in this publication including an article by Professor Shadd Maruna on desistance, and articles by Dr Nicola Carr and Dr Niamh Maguire on pre-sentence reports. I would encourage everyone to read the journal which is now available online at www.pbni.org.uk

November also marked 'Restorative Justice' week and probation staff held an event in Belfast to discuss the impact of restorative practices.

Staff within probation continue to carry out work in preparation for the roll out of the problem solving court pilots. Dr Geraldine O'Hare, PBNI's Head of Programmes and Interventions took part in a UTV programme on domestic violence broadcast on 28th November 2017 outlining the work Probation do with perpetrators of this heinous crime to reduce offending and keep people safer.

Finally, you will read about a number of Probation's initiatives, including the Enhanced Combination Order, the Graffiti Removal Scheme and problem solving programmes. There is also a new initiative to enhance service user involvement through the Service User Forum. The Service User Forum will seek feedback from those who have had direct experience of Probation services. This will help shape how Probation improves its service delivery and change lives for safer communities.

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

Cheryl Lamont

Chief Executive, Probation Board for Northern Ireland.



Welcome from the Chairman

Welcome to this edition of the Probation News magazine. The content in the articles reflects that PBNI continues to embrace challenge and seek innovative ways to provide efficient, effective services. This ensures our contribution to the Programme for Government, in particular Outcome 7 ***We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other***, and the 3 indicators: Reduce Reoffending, Reduce Crime and Increase the effectiveness of the justice system.

During the Corporate Planning period the Probation Board had sought to engage and consult with a range of stakeholders including politicians, the Department of Justice and other criminal justice organisations. This engagement continues and has developed to lead debate on what works in diverting and preventing reoffending towards better, safer outcomes for society, for victims of crime and for the individuals we work with. In particular the Board has investigated what works in a way that offers value for money for the public purse.

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland has a key role in shaping the justice system to confirm it is accessible, effective and fair. As a Board, our priority is to provide the context and governance to ensure that the organisation delivers a quality service to all citizens throughout Northern Ireland. In the year to come we will look further towards contributing to and influencing policy in the areas of rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders.

The structure of the Board which is comprised of community based public representatives, and which provides independent leadership on strategic planning and oversight, assists staff to work effectively and collaboratively in and with all communities. Throughout these pages you will see examples of how this work has developed with some very successful collaborative working to make communities safer. These initiatives show real innovation from Probation staff who continue to work to change lives for safer communities.

I hope you enjoy reading the magazine and wish our readers Seasons Greetings and every good wish for a happy, healthy New Year in 2018.

Vilma Patterson MBE

Chairman

Public Protection Arrangements Group

Working Across Borders and Boundaries to Reduce Reoffending

The eighth annual Cross-Border Public Protection Advisory Group (PPAG) Seminar was held in Belfast in November.

The Seminar themed "Reducing reoffending – Working across borders and boundaries" provides an opportunity for staff working in public protection to enhance collaboration and share learning between criminal justice partners.

Speaking at the Seminar, Cheryl Lamont, Chief Executive of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) said she was delighted to host the event: "The annual PPAG seminar provides an opportunity for us to strengthen our networks and partnerships and look at what else we can do to share information and best practice to prevent reoffending.

As well as Probation, the Public Protection Advisory Group brings together staff from the Prisons, Justice Departments and Police and An Garda Síochána. Today we acknowledge what has been achieved across borders and boundaries and look to what we can achieve together in the future."

The seminar, held in the Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings hosted representatives from across criminal justice, academia, and social partners to consider new and innovative practice and explore ways to further develop and increase partnership working.

Commenting on this year's Seminar, Vivian Geiran, Director of the Irish Probation Service, said: "Collaborative work has always been essential to what we do in probation. The annual PPAG Seminar is a time to reflect on and celebrate how we already work together, North and South, as well as with

our other partner Justice organisations. It also gives us a unique opportunity to further build on our existing interagency initiatives, to create safer, fairer and more inclusive communities."

The Public Protection Advisory Group (PPAG) is jointly chaired by the Chief Executive of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Director of the Probation Service. It was established in 2006 to specifically address how increased cross-border co-operation could be taken forward and to implement the probation elements of the agreed work programme coming from Government.

The seminar had a range of speakers with Laura Sweeney from An Garda Síochána sharing developments in practice on domestic violence, Detective Inspector Mark Dennison and the Irish Football Association's Andy Waterworth presented on the innovative sporting project called 'Staying Onside'. There was also a presentation by Dr Geraldine O'Hare, Head of Psychology, on her research undertaken through a Winston Churchill Fellowship on problem solving Mental Health Courts. The Northern Ireland Prison Service provided an insight into their mental health 'Steps' Programme, for those in custody through Governor David Savage, Governor Gary Davison, and Senior Nurse Lead Elaine Toner. Fergal Black, Director of Care & Rehabilitation in the Irish Prison Service presented current collaboration that the organisation is involved in.

There was a very thought-provoking presentation from the President of the Confederation of European Probation, Gerry McNally, who highlighted some of the innovative probation practice currently being undertaken within Europe.



Captions

1. Paul Doran, Director of Rehabilitation, Probation, Ita Burke, Director of Operations, Probation Service, Steven McCourt, DOJ, Cheryl Lamont, CEO Probation, Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service, Una Doyle, Director of Corporate Affairs, Probation Service, Hugh Hamill, Director of Operations, Probation.

2. Cheryl Lamont, CEO Probation, Judge Marie Quirke, and Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service at the PPAG seminar.

3. Cheryl Lamont, CEO Probation, Pam Cameron MLA who attended on behalf of Paul Frew MLA who kindly sponsored the event and Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service.

4. Andy Waterworth, Irish Football Association, and Detective Inspector Mark Dennison, Police Service of Northern Ireland, talk about how the Stay Onside initiative is helping to reduce reoffending.

5. Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service, Cheryl Lamont, CEO Probation, and Nick Perry, Department of Justice Permanent Secretary at the PPAG seminar.

Enhanced Combination Order Evaluation Report Published

In October 2015 the Probation Board for Northern Ireland piloted an intensive community sentence called 'The Enhanced Combination Order' (ECO) as an alternative to short prison sentences of 12 months or less. That community sentence has now been evaluated and it has been found that there was a 40% reduction in the reoffending rate for those who completed the order. The evaluation also found that the number of prison sentences of 12 months or less awarded by courts involved in the ECO pilot decreased by 10.5% suggesting that ECO was impacting on prison numbers.

Speaking at an event to launch the evaluation, Chief Executive of the Probation Board Cheryl Lamont stated: "The Enhanced Combination Order is a demanding community sentence which requires offenders to complete unpaid work, participate in victim focused work, undergo assessment and participate in programmes. An important element of this Order is the fact that every person is offered a psychological assessment. Given the high numbers of offenders presenting with mental health issues and addictions this is key part of the sentence.

"The evaluation conducted by NISRA demonstrates the effectiveness of the Order. It shows a reduction in reoffending rates, a decrease in likelihood of reoffending, and important outcomes for those who participate in programmes. We now know that this Order is making a difference in building safer communities.

The Lord Chief Justice Sir Declan Morgan added: "I am also very pleased that my judicial colleagues in the pilot areas have been quick to embrace



David Lavery, DoJ Director of Access to Justice; Cheryl Lamont, PBNI CEO; Vilma Patterson, PBNI Chair; Sir Declan Morgan, Lord Chief Justice; Paul Doran, PBNI Director of Rehabilitation

ECO as a disposal and to appreciate the benefits they can bring, not just to the offender but potentially also to those who were the victims in these cases. The judges who have been directly involved now see ECOs as providing a constructive alternative to short spells of imprisonment. I am confident that judges sitting in other parts of this jurisdiction would take a similar view if ECOs were available to them as a disposal.

"A total of 202 ECOs have been made to date. 55% of these orders have been made in the magistrates' court and 45% in the Crown Court. This breakdown suggests to me that ECOs are seen as a very credible alternative to prison, rather than as a substitute for a less onerous community disposal. I fully support the continuation of the pilot and I would very much like to see it rolled out further to other areas."

Chairman of the Probation Board Vilma Patterson concluded: "The indicative costs of ECO's has been estimated at £9k per annum which on top of the reduced reoffending rate and focus on victim issues indicates this sentence if providing value for money and better outcomes in comparison to short prison sentences. The Enhanced Combination Order has the potential to make a real difference to communities throughout Northern Ireland and assist us to change lives and reduce the number of victims of crime".

You can read the full report at www.pbni.gov.uk.

Fourteenth edition of the Irish Probation Journal

The opportunity was taken at the Public Protection Advisory Group seminar in November to launch the latest edition of the Irish Probation Journal.

This is the fourteenth edition of the journal, which is an annual publication produced in partnership by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Probation Service in the Republic of Ireland.

Its aim is to share theory and practice, increase cross-border cooperation and learning, and develop debate about work with offenders.

This edition explores contemporary emerging themes on transition, intervention and desistance. You will also read articles on leadership, radicalisation, the Enhanced Combination Order and post-release pathways for serious violent and sexual offenders.



Cheryl Lamont, CEO Probation, Gerry McNally, President of the Confederation of European Probation, Gail McGreevy, Probation and Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service launch the IPJ

There are a number of important articles from practice and academic contributors. There is an excellent article by Professor Shadd Maruna on 'desistance as a social movement', where he argues that the concept of desistance from crime should be seen as a social movement and not just an individual's journey. There is an article from Cheryl Lamont, Probation Board for Northern Ireland Chief Executive and Vivian Geiran Irish Probation Service Director, on effective leadership within the public sector. Orla Lynch, psychologist and lecturer in Criminology at University College Cork produces a thought provoking article about understanding radicalisation and its implications for criminal justice.

You can read the Irish Probation Journal for free online at www.pbni.org.uk

Probation Focus on Victims in Restorative Justice Week

To mark Restorative Justice Week this year, Probation held an event for staff on Wednesday 22nd November. PBNI contributes to reducing crime and the harm that it does by supervising service users who have offended. Central to that work, however, is a clear focus on the impact of the harm to the victim and a clear respect for victims' rights.

PBNI has had a Restorative Practice Strategy since 2013/14 and it remains a key focus of our work. Research has shown that Restorative Practice:

- Reduces crime, violence and bullying;
- Improves human behaviour;
- Strengthens civil society;
- Provides effective leadership;
- Restores relationships;
- Repairs harm.



Hugh Hamill, Director of Operations and Gillian Montgomery, Assistant Director, during Restorative Justice Week emphasised work with victims is a central part of restorative justice.

Restorative Practice is a problem solving approach which seeks to allow the person who has offended to gain insight into the impact of their behaviour, and to restore, as much as is possible, the victim or community. Restorative practice enables victims to meet or communicate with the person who has offended to explain the impact a crime has had on them.

PBNI is involved in many types of restorative practices through various aspects of its work – Community Service, Enhanced Combination Orders, Apology Letter Bank, shuttle mediation and Restorative Conferences.

You can find out more at www.pbni.org.uk

Probation ENGAGE with women in the justice system

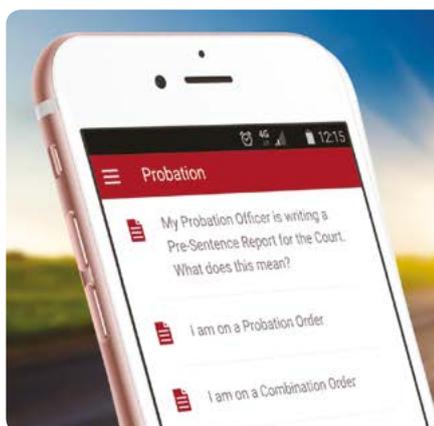
The ENGAGE project has been set up as a dedicated resource to support women within the justice system, through the delivery of a range of interventions and programmes to promote positive citizenship, to enable women to develop greater resilience, reduce reoffending and build capacity and to enable participation in the wider Department of Communities (DfC) programme 'Women involved in Community Transformation'.

The project commenced on 1 November 2017 in partnership with START360, who have been commissioned to deliver the project. START360 work with people disengaged from mainstream services and marginalised from their communities.

ENGAGE will operate across Northern Ireland focusing on women in the justice system and will support them to build their confidence, enhance communication skills and build resilience in order for them to address their individual issues.

Each participant in the project will also be offered the opportunity for referral into specialist agencies to address these specific issues as and when needed.

The project aims to initially deliver services to 40 women from November 2017 to March 2018 providing a holistic approach to addressing the specific needs of women which may include trauma, addiction, family issues, domestic and sexual violence and mental health.



Changing Lives



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.



Problem Solving addresses Domestic Violence and Abuse

Probation is centrally involved with two multi agency Domestic Violence and Abuse projects to deliver Problem Solving Justice and provide early intervention in tackling the underlying causes of offending behaviour. Both projects are funded by the Department of Justice and are linked to the Programme for Government, which recognises the need to reduce crime by addressing its causes.

1. Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Court

The pilot Domestic Violence Programme will provide judges with the option to refer convicted perpetrators to participate in a therapeutic behaviour change programme. The programme will be delivered by Probation with regular monitoring of progress undertaken by the courts. The project is aimed at males, aged 18 years and over, convicted of a domestic abuse related offence in Londonderry/Derry Magistrates Court. The District Judge will make referrals to the project at the pre-sentence stage and Probation will assess an individual's suitability for the project. A B-SAFER assessment will be completed, and if appropriate, a psychological assessment.

The pilot will involve 25-30 perpetrators on programmes of 8-9 months duration. There will be a Partnership Link Worker assigned to each case to ensure safety of victims. The perpetrator's progress will be regularly reviewed by the Judge and successful completion of the programme will be a mitigating factor when sentencing.

2. Unadjudicated Domestic Abuse Programme

The Department of Justice has secured funding under the Cross Cutting Reform Programme (CCRP) to deliver domestic abuse programmes in the WHSCT area to unadjudicated perpetrators i.e. those who are not involved in court proceedings

The project is aimed at males, aged 18 years and over, who have demonstrated the potential to be abusive within intimate relationships and whose children are assessed as at risk by Social Services. Referrals will come from Social Workers throughout the Western Trust and Probation will then deliver programmes in the Omagh and Derry regions. This project will be delivered in partnership with Women's Aid.

Improving services through Service User Engagement

Probation has developed a Service User forum to promote and support effective service user involvement to inform our policy and practice.

Probation is committed to innovating, initiating and improving the services it currently delivers. There is a substantial

body of research that reports involving service users in policy and practice processes will help improve the delivery of both policy and practice. Just as important, it helps service users to participate, take responsibility and have ownership of the services being provided. Individuals who have offended have insights, energies and commitment that can contribute to the successful rehabilitation and resettlement of those who have offended.

This is a key development for Probation, having learned from the experiences of criminal justice organisations in England, Wales and Scotland. Probation will ensure that the service user involvement initiative is fit for purpose for the Northern Ireland context and have developed close links with key academics in the area of user involvement.

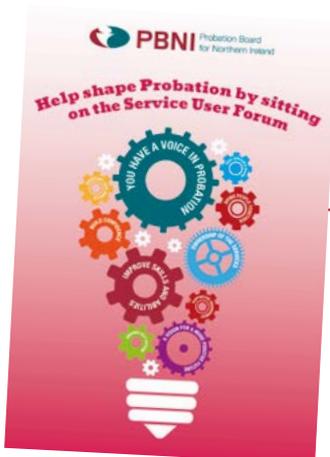
A service user will have had direct experience of Probation services, and can provide important feedback to help shape how Probation works. Because of their direct experience of services, they have a good idea what works and what does not.

There are many reasons why a service user should play an active role in the Forum as they bring their insights to the services Probation deliver. Reasons include,

- Their views will help shape what services will look like.
- They will have a better understanding of Probation and how it works.
- Being involved can build their confidence and self-esteem.
- It can help them develop and improve skills that can be referenced in job applications.
- It gives them a sense of ownership of the process of service improvement

Probation's Service User Engagement strategy has now been approved and is currently being implemented. Assistant Director Gillian Montgomery is the lead in this area and has established a working group to take forward the actions in the strategy, including a recruitment process for service users and delivering training to both staff and service users. Speaking about the work she said: "This is a key priority for Probation this year. We want service users to contribute to the design, delivery and evaluation of our services. We know that through effective engagement we can continue to improve our services throughout NI."

If you are a current or previous service user of PBNI and wish to participate in the Service User Forum, please contact either ServiceUser@pbni.gsi.gov.uk or Gillian Montgomery at Gillian.Montgomery@pbni.gsi.gov.uk.





Cleaning up Belfast with the Graffiti Removal Service

The Probation Service launched a Graffiti Removal Service with Belfast City Council in April 2017. It is part of Probation's Community Service in Belfast and is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland.

The Graffiti Removal Service provides an opportunity for those on Community Service to clean up defaced areas in Belfast. Graffiti is an issue in almost every community, damaging public and private property. It visibly highlights an anti-social element, reduces a community's confidence, makes the area look run down and can increase the fear of crime.

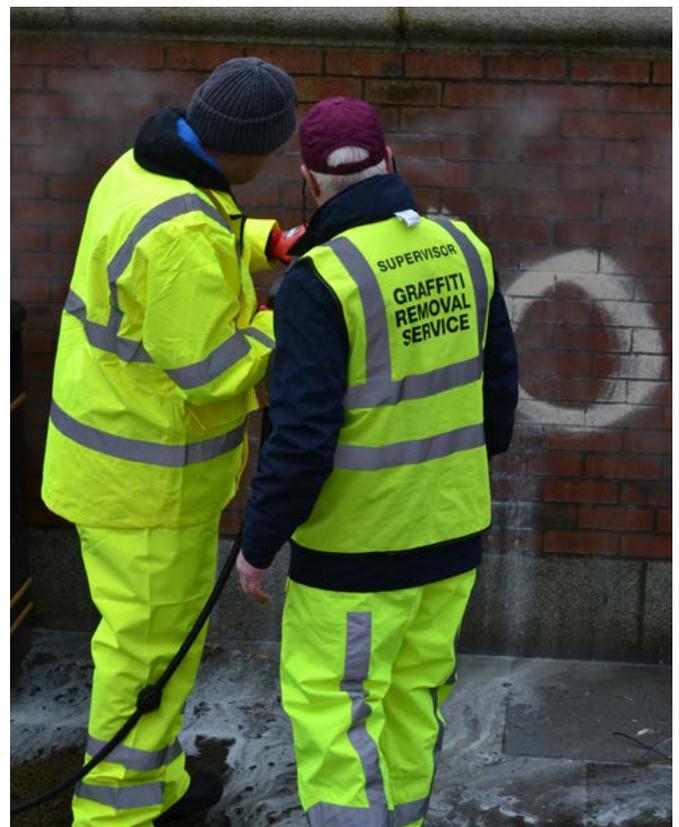
Belfast City Council removes graffiti from Council owned property and, in the case of contentious or offensive graffiti, removes it from private property with the owners signed consent.

Belfast City Council partnering with Probation is an opportunity to address non-contentious graffiti in addition to the work of the Council. The Graffiti Removal Scheme aims to increase confidence and pride of the community in public/shared spaces, reduce the fear of crime and help people feel safer.

How it works.

Belfast City Council identifies locations through requests from local communities and individuals that require cleaning. The Council also provides support to Probation's Graffiti removal team through storage facilities, training and certification.

Probation provides the Graffiti Removal Service van containing the equipment required. A Community Service Supervisor manages a team of people on community service and they use cleaning equipment like power washers to remove graffiti and clean up the public space.



To request graffiti removal in your area contact Belfast City Council on **028 9027 0230**. Or go to www.belfastcity.gov.uk and search for **"Report a street cleaning issue"**.

The public, including victims, can have a say in how and where community service takes place. Probation's Community Service staff can be contacted on **(028) 9064 7156** or at communityservice@pbni.gsi.gov.uk Or go to www.pbni.org.uk and search for **"Community Service Project Nomination Form"**



During **2016/17**
143,000 hours of
unpaid work was
delivered under
Probation supervised
Community Service

