

IN THIS EDITION OF PROBATION WORKS: Oireachtas Joint Committee on Justice and Equality, Penal Statistics, Community Service, Customer Service Policies, Probation in numbers, CEP news, Europris news, World Social Work Day, IASIO, Visit by Latvian Delegation, Launch of Illegal Dumping Initiative, Profile piece, DoJE Strategy Statement, Askaboutalcohol.ie, Lifting the lid on Greentown.  
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*Newsletter of the Probation Service (Ireland)*

*March 2017*



### Message from Director

This month (March 2017) in parallel with an initiative of the Department of Justice and Equality, encouraging all of us (the Department and its agencies) to focus on customer service as one of our core values, the Probation Service launched our updated Customer Service Policy, including new procedures, all of which are available on our website. The quality of our customer service, and specifically how



we engage and work with service users – mainly our clients who have offended – is central to the success of what we do. While our professional training and expertise, as well as our various programmes and interventions aimed at reducing risk of reoffending, are all very important, everything we do will only succeed in achieving our goal of reduced reoffending and fewer victims; where we do what we do based on a sound professional relationship, in turn based on social work ethics and values, and international standards for probation work.

It is therefore very important that we have internationally shared standards for our practice, in probation work, as much as in any professional human service delivery field. The 21<sup>st</sup> March was international social work day, when social work and social workers across the world are celebrated. Social work values and methods are key to the work probation officers do every day and international social work day gives a unique opportunity to focus, and to reflect on what we do, how we do it, and why. The following day, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe approved revised standards for the implementation of community sanctions and measures, and a handbook on addressing radicalisation to violent extremism in prisons and probation populations. Again, these two documents provide us with clear and positive benchmarks for our practice, based on the best international evidence, and grounded in established human rights standards. It is important that we continue to implement good

practice on the basis of such high standards, as well as contributing to the ongoing development and implementation of such standards into the future.

The next edition of *Probation works* will be published in May 2017.

*Vivian Geiran, Director*

Twitter: @VGeiran



## Oireachtas Joint Committee on Justice and Equality



**Pictured above:** From L: Brian Dack, Clare Daly TD, Mick Wallace TD, Ita Burke, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD (Committee Chairman), Vivian Geiran and Jack Chambers TD, at the Justice & Equality Committee Hearing on 8th March 2017.

The Probation Service, at the invitation of the Oireachtas (Parliamentary) Joint Committee on Justice and Equality, contributed to a Committee Hearing, in Leinster House, on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The Committee is currently in the process of a module examining Penal Policy, including sentencing and sanctions. As part of this, the Committee invited the Probation Service to present at one of the relevant hearings. The Director, Vivian Geiran, who was accompanied by Ita Burke and Una Doyle, Deputy Directors, and Brian Dack, Assistant Director, to the hearing, made an opening address. This was followed by a question and answer session, including discussion of a wide range of issues, across the spectrum of penal policy, the work of the

## SPACE Penal Statistics Published



The annual statistics on numbers in prison (SPACE I) and on probation (SPACE II) across the Council of Europe Member States were published by the Council of Europe and the University of Lausanne earlier this month. The recently published statistics show that while numbers being sent to prison and placed on probation show a downward trend overall, in individual jurisdictions, some features such as prison overcrowding, remain a persistent challenge.

More information is available at:

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/space-prisons-survey-for-2015>

The SPACE I and II reports are available at the following link: <http://wp.unil.ch/space>

Probation Service, and how crime, offending and offenders should be addressed. A delegation from the Irish Prison Service appeared before the Committee on the same day.

The full text of Vivian Geiran's opening address to the Committee is available at:

<http://bit.ly/2njA5DP>

A video recording of the Justice and Equality Committee hearing on 8<sup>th</sup> March is available here:

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=34786&&CatID=127>

More information on the Joint Committee is available here:

[http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/oireachtasbusiness/committees\\_list/jde-committee](http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/oireachtasbusiness/committees_list/jde-committee)

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE "Working with Juvéniles and Young Adult Offenders"

6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June, Barcelona



Over the last ten years approximately, the question of how to respond appropriately to the offending of young adults has emerged as a point of increased focus within international criminological research and criminal policy. Responding to juvenile and young adult offending is a unique policy and practice challenge coupled with the challenges of transition to adulthood, maturing processes and very high levels of risk-taking and re-offending.

On 6–7 June 2017 Confederation of European Probation (CEP) is hosting a Conference on working with juveniles and young adult offenders, as a follow-up of the very successful Conference on the same theme in Lillestrom, Norway in September 2016.

The Working with Juveniles and Young Adult Offenders Conference

## Community Service

In the context of the full impact of the Fines Act, 2014 being felt this year, the Probation Service recently acquired three new minibuses, two for use in the West of Ireland, the other for use in Dublin. Their main function will be for transporting clients on community service and materials involved in such work. This will ensure the more efficient implementation of alternatives to custody for non-payment of fines, particularly in parts of the country where access and transport may be a challenge, as well as facilitating a wider range of work to be done, benefitting local communities and enabling offenders to make reparation for their wrongdoing.



## Revised Customer Service Policy and Procedures Published

will be held at the Centre for Legal Studies and Specialized Training (CEJFE) Ausias March, 40 Barcelona on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

The draft programme and registration for the Working with Juveniles and Young Adult Offenders Conference can be accessed at <http://www.cep-probation.org/conference-on-youth-and-young-adult-offenders/>

Early booking is advised due to the anticipated high level of demand for places.

## World Social Work Day

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March was designated by the International Federation of Social Work as World Social Work Day, 2017. The theme this year was: *Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability*. Community, and our environment, are central parts of the focus of the work of the Probation Service. For example, building community and environmental sustainability come together as joint objectives in the various community service programmes we run across the country every week. And central to all the work of the Probation Service are the social work values, training and working methods that Probation Officers use in offender rehabilitation.



The Probation Service launched its revised customer service policy and procedures earlier this month. The documentation includes an updated complaints procedure. All of the relevant documentation is available on our website at the following link:

<http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/WebPages/WP16000080>



- [Director's address to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Justice & Equality hearing on penal reform, 8th March 2017.](#)
- [Today with Sean O'Rourke Podcast on the Drug Treatment Courts](#)
- [Hidden Victims Seminar University of Limerick 27th April 2017](#)
- [Applications from Community Based Organisations interested in providing a Garda Youth Diversion Project service in County Roscommon](#)

## Profile on New Probation Officers



For the first time since 2008 the appointment of a new group of Probation Officers has taken place. These nineteen new members of staff bring a wide breath of social work experience and knowledge with them to the Probation Service, which has far reaching benefits to the Service, our clients and the community as a whole.

Their Induction training began on the 6th of March and is on-going. For the new Officers, this period of induction training is a time to learn about their new roles. It is also a time to form friendships that will endure over the course of their career; which is testament to the positive working environment experienced by staff within the Probation Service. We warmly welcome the new Probation Officers and wish them every success in their future careers.

We briefly chatted with a few of our new Probation Officers and asked them to reflect on some of the day to day of their previous roles and for a little insight into their new roles in the Probation Service

**Amanda O'Neill, Probation Officer based in the Waterford office said:**

"As a Probation Officer in West Ealing, London, I worked with service users, both in the community and custody, who presented a medium, high and very high risk of serious harm to the public. I used the OASys risk assessment tool on a daily basis and engaged

## Probation in numbers



*This month (March 2017) there are:*

**8,577** Persons under Probation Service Supervision in the community;

**1,497** Prisoners receiving probation assistance in custody;

**2,323** People on Community Service

**1,228** Persons on various types of post-release probation supervision

**1,341** Women on probation Supervision in the community, and

**263** persons under eighteen years of age under probation supervision in the community

*The monthly Probation Service 'snapshot' statistical table is available below:*

<http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB//WebPages/WP1700004>

Probation Service: Monthly Offender Population Report (January 2017)						
Offender Type	Approved	Approved and Ready to Release	Ready to Release	Total and Available	In Custody	Total Offenders
Male	2,436	1,036	1,225	4,697	1,497	6,194
Female	281	165	105	551	84	635
Total	2,717	1,201	1,330	5,248	1,581	6,829
Under 18	120	35	25	180	8	188
18 and over	2,597	1,166	1,305	5,068	1,573	6,641
<b>Totals:</b>				<b>Total Caseload, in community: 5,248</b>	<b>Total Caseload, in custody: 1,581</b>	<b>6,829</b>
Grand Total, national Probation Service caseload: 78,957						
The following are the major community supervision categories:						
Probation Type Supervision <sup>1</sup>					3,536	
Community Service <sup>2</sup>					2,275	
Supervision in the Community Post Release from Custody <sup>3</sup>					1,237	
Life sentence prisoners on supervision in the community <sup>4</sup>					66	
Sex offenders on supervision post-release from custody <sup>5</sup>					77	
Total						5,361

<sup>1</sup>Includes: Probation, Probation on Licence, Probation on Licence with Conditions, Probation on Licence with Conditions and Probation on Licence with Conditions (with a suspended sentence).  
<sup>2</sup>Includes: Probation on Licence, Probation on Licence with Conditions, Probation on Licence with Conditions and Probation on Licence with Conditions (with a suspended sentence).  
<sup>3</sup>Includes: Probation on Licence, Probation on Licence with Conditions, Probation on Licence with Conditions and Probation on Licence with Conditions (with a suspended sentence).  
<sup>4</sup>Includes: Probation on Licence, Probation on Licence with Conditions, Probation on Licence with Conditions and Probation on Licence with Conditions (with a suspended sentence).  
<sup>5</sup>Includes: Probation on Licence, Probation on Licence with Conditions, Probation on Licence with Conditions and Probation on Licence with Conditions (with a suspended sentence).  
 \* Figures are as at 31st January 2017.  
 \*\* Figures are as at 31st January 2017.  
 \*\*\* Figures are as at 31st January 2017.  
 \*\*\*\* Figures are as at 31st January 2017.

with multi-agency public protection arrangements in order to ensure that those who presented the highest risk of harm to others were restricted and monitored using appropriate measures. I also completed Court reports, breach reports, formed licence conditions, and liaised with the police, prisons and Social Services.

As a Probation Officer within the Waterford Team, my day involves interviewing service users for the completion of Court reports. I use the LSI-R assessment tool on a daily basis to determine an individual's risk of re-offending and to inform me of appropriate interventions for their case management plan. I also work with service users on Probation Orders and PSSSOs in the community, and liaise with other agencies, where relevant, to ensure that all service users receive the appropriate support throughout the duration of their orders."

**Claire McNamara, Probation Officer with the Dublin Court**

**Liaison Team said:**

"I always had an interest in working in the area of criminal justice and in 2011, I did a student placement with the Probation Service Homeless Offenders Team. The placement provided me with the opportunity to gain practical experience in the area, as well as further my knowledge particularly in the areas of Restorative Justice and specialist Courts.

As part of my Masters in Social Work, I completed my thesis on the Drug Treatment Court and the role of social work within this model.

Having the opportunity to work on different teams appeals to me as each role brings new experiences, challenges and opportunities."

**Mary Keogh, Probation Officer on the Dublin Community Service**

**Team said:**

"When I qualified I initially worked in Naas General Hospital as a Locum Medical Social Worker for a number of months. I then worked in TUSLA Child and Family Agency in Kildare/West Wicklow for a number of years working on varies teams (Children in Care, Child Protection and Fostering). Following this I moved to the Health Service Executive's Children's Disability Services in



**Confederation of European Probation (CEP) News**

The January 2017 edition of the CEP newsletter is available at the following link:

<http://createsend.com/t/t-ED7F914203AC0037>



**Europris News**

The latest (March 2017) edition of the Europris newsletter has been published and is available at:

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs167/1110081848856/archive/1127397871288.html>

**Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders (IASIO)**



IASIO is a key partner organisation for the Probation Service, providing offenders on probation supervision with improved access to education, training and employment. The work of IASIO was highlighted in the current (Spring

Carlow/Kilkenny for a year.

I joined the Probation Service in January 2017 and was appointed to the Community Service Team. I am the Probation Officer for the Community Return Programme that covers the Dublin and greater Dublin area. I also carry out Community Service inductions."

**Audrey O'Sullivan, Probation Officer in Wheatfield–Cloverhill said:**

"I spent eight years working as Social Care Worker in Dublin based homeless services before making a very conscious decision to return to college as a mature student and complete the Masters in Social Work in Trinity College Dublin.

Crime, offending behaviour and the impact that it had on the lives of service–users that I'd worked with in the homeless services ignited my interest in becoming a Probation Officer. Fortunately, in 2014 I was given a Locum contract in Wheatfield Place of Detention. My experience was furthered by a much enjoyed year working as a Medical Social Worker in an acute hospital setting in Beaumont. In January '17 I was thrilled to have been given the opportunity to return as a full–time Probation Officer in Wheatfield Place of Detention, with a dual role of completing some assessment work in Cloverhill Prison.

As a new Probation Officer working in Wheatfield and Cloverhill Prison I have learned that a multi–disciplinary team approach is essential to making a positive impact in my work with Probation service–users, who can be quite entrenched in their offending behaviour. A prison setting has given me a real opportunity to use a breadth of social work theory, skills and knowledge in the context of assessment and supervision.

Equally, loss of liberty and the preciousness of liberty is also something which is consciously on my mind every day.

Having worked in Wheatfield as a Locum, I am so happy to have been given the chance to return to work with such a hard–working, dedicated and united team of Probation Officers."

**Lifting the Lid on Greentown**

2017) edition of "Better Business," published by the Small Firms Association.

The article is available at the following link:

<http://bit.ly/2nR7HtB>

**Visit by Senior Management Team  
from the Latvian Probation Service**



On February 8th and 9th the Probation Service hosted a visit by a delegation of senior managers from the Latvian Probation Service. The visiting delegation comprised **Mihails Papsujevičs**, Head of the Probation Service, **Ilona Linde**, Head of Community Supervision and Treatment Programmes, **Sanita Škribļaka**, Head of the Administration and **Imants Jurevičius**, Project Manager. During their visit they met with Service management and staff, explored issues of shared interest and worked on processes and actions in the management of probation systems.

Dr Sean Redmond, Professor of Youth Justice at the University of Limerick, on secondment from the Irish Youth Justice Service, has completed a four-year study of a criminal network operating in an anonymous community outside of Dublin. The study aimed to explore the role of 'network' as an aggravating factor in influencing the trajectories of children involved in criminal behaviour.

The report of the study, **Lifting the Lid on Greentown**, funded by the Departments of Justice and Equality and Children and Youth Affairs, found that criminal gangs use drugs, alcohol, and the notion of status to entice children into a life of crime.

The location of the study was anonymised and renamed Greentown to prevent young people and the community from being identified. The report, using Pulse data and testimony of local Gardaí, sought to "get under the bonnet" of how children become engaged in criminal networks. The report worked to identify the kind of drivers and motivations that entrap children into more prolific and more serious crime.

**Lifting the Lid** states that, "[t]his small population of children in Greentown was, during 2010 and 2011, responsible for a significant level of serious crime, five times higher than equivalent national averages for burglary,".

The findings in **Lifting the Lid on Greentown** point out that even though the children involved in the Greentown network represent a small minority, their activities, from a law enforcement perspective, posed a significant problem. Understanding the nature of such networks and their influence on children's propensity for serious and multiple offences is a first step in seeking solutions for policy makers and practitioners in this often hidden and complex area of youth justice.

Dr Redmond said the problems described in **Lifting the Lid on Greentown** must be tackled, but fresh thinking was also needed. Katherine Zappone, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, and David Staunton, Minister of State in the Department of Justice and Equality, welcomed the report on its publication.

**Lifting the Lid on Greentown**, published by the Department of



## Council of Europe News

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers approved a revision of the European Rules on Community Sanctions and Measures. The Committee of Ministers also took note of a handbook on addressing radicalisation to violent extremism, for prison and probation services, paving the way for both documents to be published and disseminated throughout the Members States. These two documents were drafted by the Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP), chaired by Vivian Geiran, with major inputs from a number of external experts. Professor Rob Canton worked with the PC-CP on the Rules on Community Sanctions and Measures. Elaine Pressman, Merel Molenkamp and Christopher Dean worked on drafting the handbook on radicalisation. Both documents represent significant advances in modernising and developing new practice standards in probation and prison work.

More information, including the text of the two new documents, is available at:

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/new-standards-on-community-sanctions-and-preventing-radicalisation-in-prisons-and-probation>

Vivian Geiran, will chair the next meeting of the PC-CP working group, on 10-12<sup>th</sup> April, in Strasbourg. The PC-CP work programme for the coming year includes, *inter alia*, guidelines on practice regarding children of prisoners,



Children and Youth Affairs, can be accessed at

[http://ulsites.ul.ie/law/sites/default/files/3910\\_DCYA\\_Greentown\\_%20Full%20report%20final%20version.pdf](http://ulsites.ul.ie/law/sites/default/files/3910_DCYA_Greentown_%20Full%20report%20final%20version.pdf)

Irish Probation Journal 2015 featured an article, *The Greentown Crime Network: Introducing its Cast of Principal Actors*, by Dr.

Sean Redmond on his study which can be accessed at

[http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/0/873F5D4C3D8951498025802E0049B02A/\\$File/IPJ2015pages205to228.pdf](http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/0/873F5D4C3D8951498025802E0049B02A/$File/IPJ2015pages205to228.pdf)



On 7th March 2017, Marcella Corcoran Kennedy TD, Minister of State for Health Promotion, launched the Health Service Executive Alcohol Programme's website [www.askaboutalcohol.ie](http://www.askaboutalcohol.ie). The website has been created to provide an authoritative information source on alcohol risks to enable everyone to manage their own health better. It is also designed to work alongside other public health measures such as legislation and any other planned regulatory changes. It is a very useful resource in providing practical information regarding alcohol use and associated harms. The site also provides a listing of treatment / support services available nationally. The Probation Service was represented at the launch and we are currently reviewing our own strategic response to Substance / Alcohol Misuse, to further develop and support effective practice.

development of a practice guideline on Restorative Justice in probation and prisons in Europe, and revision of the commentary to the European Prison Rules.

Papers related to the work of the PC-CP are available through the following link:

[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/prisons/PCCP\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/prisons/PCCP_en.asp)

## Launch of Illegal Dumping Initiative



Pictured above: From L: Brian Dack, Kevin O'Leary, Michael McGarvey, Minister Denis Naughten, Members of the Civil Defence & Nick Bond (WERLA)

A national initiative focussing on illegal dumping was launched by Denis Naughten T.D. Minister for Communications, Climate Change and Natural Resources, on Monday 13th March. This project is being progressed through the Department of the Environment and the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities.

Brian Dack, Assistant Director with the Probation Service, presented to the launch on Community Service.

### Outline of 2017 Illegal Dumping Initiative

The aim of the initiative is to provide support for projects tackling illegal dumping through means such as monitoring and surveillance of dumping black spots. Support will be provided to projects where community groups and other State

agencies work in partnership to clean-up and prevent illegal dumping. The proposed illegal dumping initiative will be delivered through the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA) offices.

The Probation Service was approached by WERLA to become involved in this national initiative, as a direct result of the positive working relationship developed between the Community Service Team Cork and Cork City Council; resulting in a range of practical benefits for the community from those completing Community Service.

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**Department of Justice and  
Equality New Strategy Statement  
2016 – 2019**



The Department of Justice and Equality Strategy Statement 2016 – 2019 was approved by Government on 13th December 2016 and formally presented to the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality Frances Fitzgerald on 6th March 2017.

The Strategy Statement 2016 – 2019 is available

through the following

link: <http://bit.ly/2ok50Rz>



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the Probation Works newsletter?  
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'news@probation.ie'**

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