

Probation *works*

Newsletter of the Probation Service (Ireland)

May 2014

In this edition of *Probation works*: Waterford Women's Centre, Martin Tansey Lecture, Newly launched Choice & Challenge Programme, Probation Project Profile: PALLS Project Limerick, Probation in numbers.

Message from Director

This year's Martin Tansey lecture, delivered by Professor Paul Senior was truly inspirational. Although focused on a specific programme - Integrated Offender Management (IOM) - the presentation demonstrated the value of real interagency work to achieve strategic goals such as significantly reducing rates of reoffending among groups of prolific offenders in the community. Professor Senior demonstrated what can be achieved by refocusing, prioritising and pooling existing resources, among agencies committed to addressing crime effectively, on a collaborative basis. Paul's presentation, in which he drew on IOM evaluations he has led, also showed that staff from each agency (police, probation and prisons, as well as other statutory agencies and the community and voluntary sector) bring their own unique skills, focus and experience to initiatives such as IOM, by co-locating and working very closely together, but without having to "morph" into each other. The beauty and richness of this approach really is in the differences each agency brings to the mix. The evidence from offenders who have taken part in IOM programmes is that they value the fact that all the agencies they deal with 'talk to each other' and that they (the offenders) get a more concentrated and effective service as a result.



In the same vein, we welcome Prison Officer June Kelly, who has just been assigned by the Irish Prison Service (IPS) to join the co-located Probation-Prisons Community Return and Community Support Unit in Probation Headquarters, in Haymarket, Dublin. June joins Andy Brennan, IPS manager and his Probation Service colleagues in the Unit, which has enjoyed continuing success in managing the transition of selected prisoners to the community under structured early release programmes. These programmes, which are for those serving prison sentences of one to eight years (Community Return) and less than twelve months (Community Support), are co-ordinated by our co-located Prisons-Probation team, and delivered by community-based Probation teams, in cooperation with our community and voluntary sector partners, and have been really cost-effective. We are currently completing an initial evaluation study on the Community Return programme, the lessons from which will enable us to build further on this valuable initiative in the future.

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

Vivian Geiran, Director

Martin Tansey Lecture

The 7th Annual Martin Tansey Lecture, organised by the Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD) was delivered by Professor Paul Senior of the Hallam Centre for Community Justice at Sheffield Hallam University, in the Criminal Courts of Justice, Dublin on Tuesday the 29th of April 2014. The title of the lecture was: Integrated Offender Management: Pooling Resources and Expertise, and Creating Effective Working Partnerships.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM), which brings together police, probation and prisons in co-located teams, to tackle prolific and persistent offending in a multi-agency way at local level, is well established in Britain and elsewhere. Prof. Senior's lecture charted the development of IOM in theory and practice and drew from a number of significant British evaluations to highlight what works and doesn't work in this type of programme. The question and answer, and discussion, part of the event was lively and pointed to how we might apply the lessons of IOM in Ireland. Paul's lecture was captivating, and the evening was a fitting memorial to the late Martin Tansey, who was Principal Probation Officer in Ireland for many years.



Pictured above:
Professor Paul Senior

A copy of Paul Senior's [presentation](#) is available on the [ACJRD website](#).

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New Programme to interrupt offending behaviour

The Probation Service, in collaboration with the Bridge Project (Dublin) and our Programme Development Unit, have developed a new one-to-one intervention programme to be delivered by Probation Officers with probationers who have been assessed as medium to high risk of reoffending.



Pictured above: Siobhán and Aising from the Bridge Project preparing for the launch of the new Choice and Challenge (one-to-one) programme

The *Choice and Challenge* programme comprises four modules of four sessions each, and is based on cognitive-behavioural approaches to work with offenders. The programme addresses general offending behaviour risk issues, and is designed to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. It has been developed and tested by the Probation Service's Programme Delivery Unit and is now being made available to Probation Officers across the country for use with offenders under our supervision.

Justice Co-operation Network (JCN) Final Conference scheduled for 3rd to 5th September 2014.

Estonia, Finland, Ireland and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (Germany), with the University of Greifswald as advisers, are partners in an EU funded project to examine and develop best practice in the transition management and supervision of high risk offenders leaving custody as well as developing a body of knowledge and creating an EU network of expertise. The project began in November 2012 and will be concluded in October 2014.



The final conference of the European treatment and transition management of high risk offenders project will be held in the **Hohe Düne in Rostock-Warnemünde** - <http://www.hohe-duene.de> from **3rd to 5th September 2014**.

The Conference will feature important presentations on the findings from the project, valuable contributions from experts and lively workshop discussions. It will be a not-to-be-missed opportunity for networking, to meet with experienced colleagues and experts in transition management, to exchange knowledge and develop partnerships. There will be special conference travel, attendance and conference arrangements in place for participants. As places will be limited please contact the German JCN team for further information as early as possible by e-mail at: jcn.conference@jm.mv-regierung.de.

The Probation Service in Numbers:

911 - people released onto the Community Return (structured/supervised early release from prison [one to eight year sentences], with Community Service) programme, since the programme started, in October 2011.

138 - people currently on Community Return.

68 - people currently on the Community Support (structured early release, with supports, of people serving prison sentences of twelve months.

2 - Irish Prison Service staff members now in co-located unit in Probation Headquarters in Dublin, managing Community Return and Community Support programmes.

Welcome June Kelly to the Community Return co-located unit in Probation Service HQ

The Probation Service is delighted to welcome June Kelly from the Irish Prison Service as a new addition to the co-located Community Return Unit. June joined the IPS in 2002 and has spent most of her career to date in Wheatfield Prison. Prior to taking up her current position with Andy Brennan, June was a Class Officer in Wheatfield Prison assigned to the new unit for young offenders transferred from the now defunct St.Patrick's Institution. Currently studying for a degree in Social Care at Athlone Institute, June beat off competition from twenty other hopefuls to land her new role. Congratulations to her and we are confident she will enjoy her time working with officers of the Probation Service in this challenging and innovative interagency role.



Waterford Women's Centre thanks the Probation Service

"The management, staff and women's groups in the Waterford Women's Centre appreciates and are delighted with the renovation and decorating work completed by the Waterford Probation Services Community Service Programme over the last year.



The Women's Centre is a community development project and has since 1995 provided community education programmes for women experiencing disadvantage in Waterford. A 50 place childcare centre on site provides support for women attending programmes both in the Centre and progressing onto other external training education and employment. A Domestic Abuse Support Service (DASS) supports women experiencing domestic abuse to access relevant service. We also provide Partner Support for the MEND Programme.

The Women's Centre provides an alternative education/development path that is more accessible to the women we work with and one which can support access to local services and progression onto formal education training and employment routes.



The Women's Centre consists of three adjoining, now interlinked, town houses near Waterford City Centre. The third house was purchased by the voluntary management committee in 2008/09 just before the economic downturn. Due to the reduction in funding for capital projects we were unable to renovate this building.

We are very grateful for the work done by the men and women on Community Service during the last 12 months. The work they did would not otherwise have been done.

We found the community service programme very worthwhile and got a strong sense from interactions with the workers that they were glad to be doing work that was worthwhile and that made a significant difference to peoples life. Indeed two workers offered to do voluntary work in the Centre after their community service was completed which was really appreciated. We will always be grateful to the programme for coming to our aid at a time when we felt all the doors were closed to us. The work has enabled us to work towards setting up a community enterprise; cafe, second hand shop and holistic therapy treatment room and increase the number of women we can work with." Above are 'before' and 'after' photographs of the hallway of the women's centre.



Retirement of Terry Boyle Regional Manager



Terry Boyle, Regional Manager, retired from the Probation Service with effect from 31st March 2014. Since joining the Probation Service in 1985 Terry has worked as a Probation Officer, Senior Probation Officer and Regional Manager across the range of work in the Service.

Throughout his career in the Probation Service, Terry has been committed to the belief in people's capacity to overcome adversity and make positive changes in their lives. He has been a strong advocate for social inclusion and reintegration and championed a number of innovative and groundbreaking community based developments with both a national and local remit. These include IASIO, Restorative Justice in the Community, Cork Alliance and Ceim Ar Ceim.

Terry has made a significant contribution to the Service, welcoming organisational change and always maintaining the importance of a professional frontline service. As Terry leaves the Probation Service with fond memories, good friends and a range of achievements, his colleagues and friends in the Probation Service wish him all the very best for a happy retirement.

Fines (Payment & Recovery) Act 2014 completes its passage through the House of the Oireachtas

The passage of the Fines (Payment and Recovery) Bill 2013 was completed through both Houses of the Oireachtas on 10th April 2014. The Fines (Payment and Recovery) Act 2014, as now passed, delivers on the Programme for Government commitment to introduce attachment of earnings to recover unpaid fines. Under this legislation the law has been radically reformed and all the provisions relating to the payment and recovery of fines are to be found in one place.

- Fines will be set at a level that takes into account the person's financial circumstances;
- All fines over €100 can be paid by installments;
- Where a person defaults, he or she is brought back to court where the judge first considers making an Attachment Order;
- Imprisonment will only apply where it is not possible to make a Community Service Order or where one is made and the person fails to comply with it;
- Where it is not appropriate to make an Attachment Order, the judge can make either a Recovery Order, where the fine is more than €500 or a Community Service Order; and
- Where either an Attachment Order or a Recovery Order are made and the fine is still not recovered in full, the court can make a Community Service Order.

Minister Shatter commented that: "The Fines Bill will provide an appropriate response to the twin problems of the refusal or failure of some people to pay fines and the inappropriateness of imprisonment as the automatic response where this happens.

More than 8,000 people were imprisoned for the non-payment of fines in 2013 and it seems certain that with the changes to the fines system that will flow from the implementation of the Act, that number will be greatly reduced. It is anticipated that the provisions in the Act will become operational as soon as possible. The Courts Service expect to be in a position to accept installment payments in the Autumn and the other provisions, such as attachment, recovery and community service will kick in once the default provisions are engaged, probably towards the end of this year or early next year.

PROBATION PROJECT PROFILE



The PALLS project in Limerick has been in operation, working with adult clients of the Probation Service, since 2009. The core program is 20 hours a week, running from September to July and is offered to male clients of the Probation Service (over 23 years of age), irrespective of the nature of their criminal conviction. Once on the programme participants are referred to as trainees. Trainees and staff work together to develop Rules of Engagement to ensure that everyone feels safe in the centre. This is achieved through creating a Group Contract, offering support or mediation between trainees with violent histories, and a commitment from trainees to leave current conflicts outside of the project. Over the years trainees from different parts of Limerick City and elsewhere have worked side by side in PALLS at a time when Limerick was very divided and most trainees did not have free movement around their city.

The core programme provided is a personalised one, based on careful assessment and, on-going listening to the needs of the trainees. The programme consists of three core elements –academic skills; vocational and practical training; and personal and holistic development. In addition, auxiliary supports are fostered informally through the trainees' experience of being part of a respectful and challenging community. Components in the programme include but are not limited to: pre-development induction, accredited and in house workshop training (safe pass, forklift, welding, woodturning, and engineering), literacy support, yoga, art therapy, community integration projects, restorative practices, Individual Action Plans, drug and alcohol support group, philosophy and critical thinking, team building, outdoor pursuits club, driving lessons etc.

On average the project works with 70 trainees annually, providing different levels of support and training including but not limited to; the high intensity support in the men's core programme, part time light programme (individualised), prison inreach and recruitment, drop in and after care support, the women's gender specific program 'Helping Women Recover' and individual sex offender support.