

Derbyshire Probation Area

Annual Review 2007/8



Area gains Band 3 rating for overall performance

As a result of year-long focus on the nationally-set targets in over thirty areas of performance, Derbyshire Probation Area achieved an overall Band 3 rating. The highest achievable level is Band 4. This was an improvement on the previous year's result.

Of the thirty one targets set, Derbyshire achieved the highest rating (Band 4) in twenty. This rating is not only measured against the area's own set targets, but also against all other Probation areas' results. To gain Band 4 one must be in the top 25 percent of the 42 Areas across England and Wales.

The national performance targets focus on Public Protection processes, Interventions, Offender Management and Operational Capability.

Derbyshire Probation prides itself on its innovative approach to working practices, to partnerships and the implementation of Best Practice in all activities.

Derbyshire Project features nationally

The Alderbrook Unpaid Work project in the High Peak featured in the Criminal Justice System national document "A Strategic Plan for Criminal Justice 2008 - 2011, An Overview".

It was cited as a case study on working with local communities and mention was made of the Greenwatch award for sustainability, won by the project in 2006 and given by the Environment Agency in Derbyshire.

The project has been a long-standing exercise in association with The Alderbrook Centre. It has also incorporated City & Guilds training for offenders provided by Broomfield Hall, Derby College, itself a project with Derbyshire Probation that gained a national award in 2007.



The new shop - built by offenders in our Derby workshop

Our Vision: To be the best possible provider of offender management services and interventions

The Derbyshire Probation Board

Supporting the Service.

Responsible to the Home Secretary for the governance of the county's Probation Service, members of the Board bring to the role a wealth of experience from other spheres of work. For 2007/8 the members were:

Stephen Taylor, Chair

A qualified accountant, Steve had a long career in the rail industry, from the property to heavy engineering units, culminating as Finance Director of Virgin Trains.

Denise White

Derbyshire Probation Area Chief Officer.

Elizabeth (Beth) Richardson

A Magistrate, she previously worked for the Insolvency Service and ACAS. Trustee and Director of the Canaan Trust in Erewash.

Balwant Bubber

Running his own businesses in Derby, Balwant is also an executive member of the Racial Equality Council, Derby; a member of Derbyshire Constabulary Community Advisory Committee; chair of Sure Start, Rosehill; and a trustee of the Hindu Temple in Derby.

Mike Wood

After University, Mike became a Social Worker. Moving to Derbyshire, he rose to become Assistant Head of the County Council's Children's Services. Since retirement he has been a member of the Registration & Conduct Committees of the General Social Care Council.

Kit (Heather) Salt

School governor, Manager of Adult Community Education Centre in Derby, and Board member for a women's charity in Derby.

Michael Bishop

Magistrate, Chair of the Derbyshire Association for Blind People, Chair of Heritage Care and member of the Hearing Aid Council. Previously the Director of Social Services, Derbyshire and Deputy Chair of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf.

George Lowe

Past head teacher in Rotherham and Chesterfield, now mentor for students on teaching practice at Hallam University.

His Honour Judge John Wait

Resident Judge at Derby Crown Court.

Dennis Gammage

Ex Police Inspector, he held several senior posts with Unilever and Cadbury Schweppes. A JP, and past Court Chair and past Chair of High Peak Bench

Cllr Margaret Redfern

Elected Member of Derby City Council and School Governor at Beaufort Community Primary School.

John Burns

After a career in the Probation Service, rising to ACO, Durham, also was assistant director NCH Children's Services, Sessional Researcher with Children's Society and has held many other posts.

Adrian Evans

After a career with Derbyshire Constabulary he became Chief Exec of Endeavour (charity for disaffected young people). Past chair Amber Valley Primary Care Trust and member of Derbyshire Partnership Forum.

From the Chief Officer

2007/8 was yet another year of change for the Probation Service. In May NOMS became part of the Ministry of Justice and from April 2008 the Director General, Phil Wheatley, became responsible for the delivery of both Prison and Probation Services. The implications and impact of these changes are being worked through but there is no doubt that they will have long term significance for the direction of Probation both nationally and locally.

Derbyshire continued to perform well with staff delivering excellent results in nearly all areas of service delivery. The last part of the year was spent in planning for anticipated substantial budget cuts; however at the last minute additional money (linked to challenging targets) was forthcoming. This necessitated a swift re-appraisal of our structures and staffing plan to allow for significant growth in 2008/9.

Changes at the Centre led to a delay in decision about Trust status; following the creation of the first 6 Trusts (of which we were not one) there were no further developments and it is unlikely that there will be in the short term. However, we continue to work towards this goal in ensuring achievement of targets and business excellence.

In the summer of 2007 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation undertook an Offender Management inspection of Derbyshire Probation Service. Part of a national series of inspections, it was designed to assess the quality of the area's service delivery and processes. The inspection reviewed all aspects of Derbyshire's offender management activities.

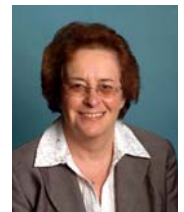
We received a very positive report; one comment being: "One of the area's strengths was the innovation that occurred within the organisation and its willingness to learn from external scrutiny."

2007 also saw us begin a pilot project for the government designed to offer credible alternatives to sending some offenders to prison. The Intensive Alternative to Custody (IAC) pilot began in South Derbyshire and is now being expanded across the county.

I hope this brief review is of interest. You can find more information about us on our website - www.dpsonline.org.uk

Denise White

Denise White, Chief Officer
Derbyshire Probation



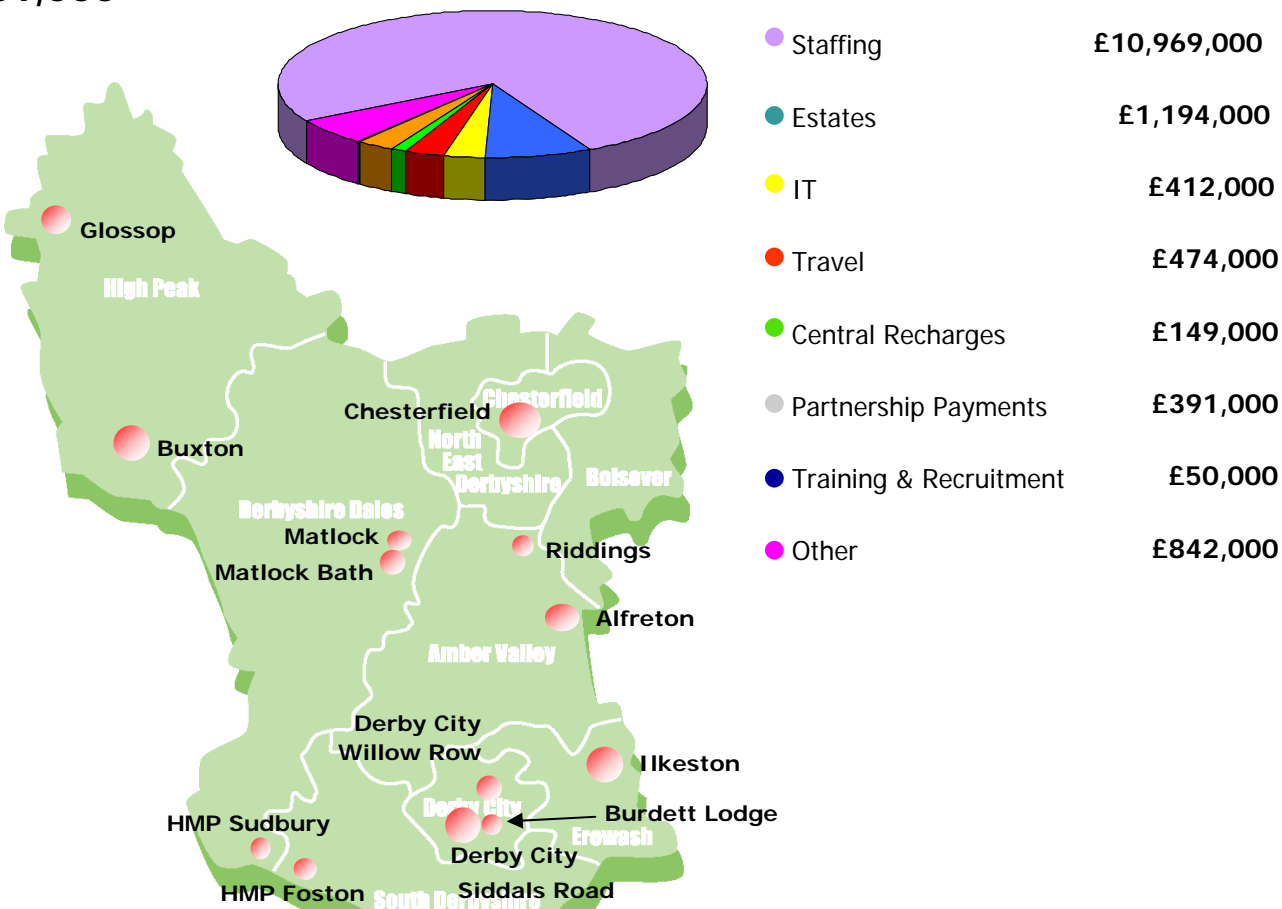
Last year we

Supervised some 3,850 offenders

Produced almost 3,500 reports to court

Supervised 165,600 hours of unpaid work, worth over £886,000 to the community

Actual Gross Spending 2007/8
£14,481,000

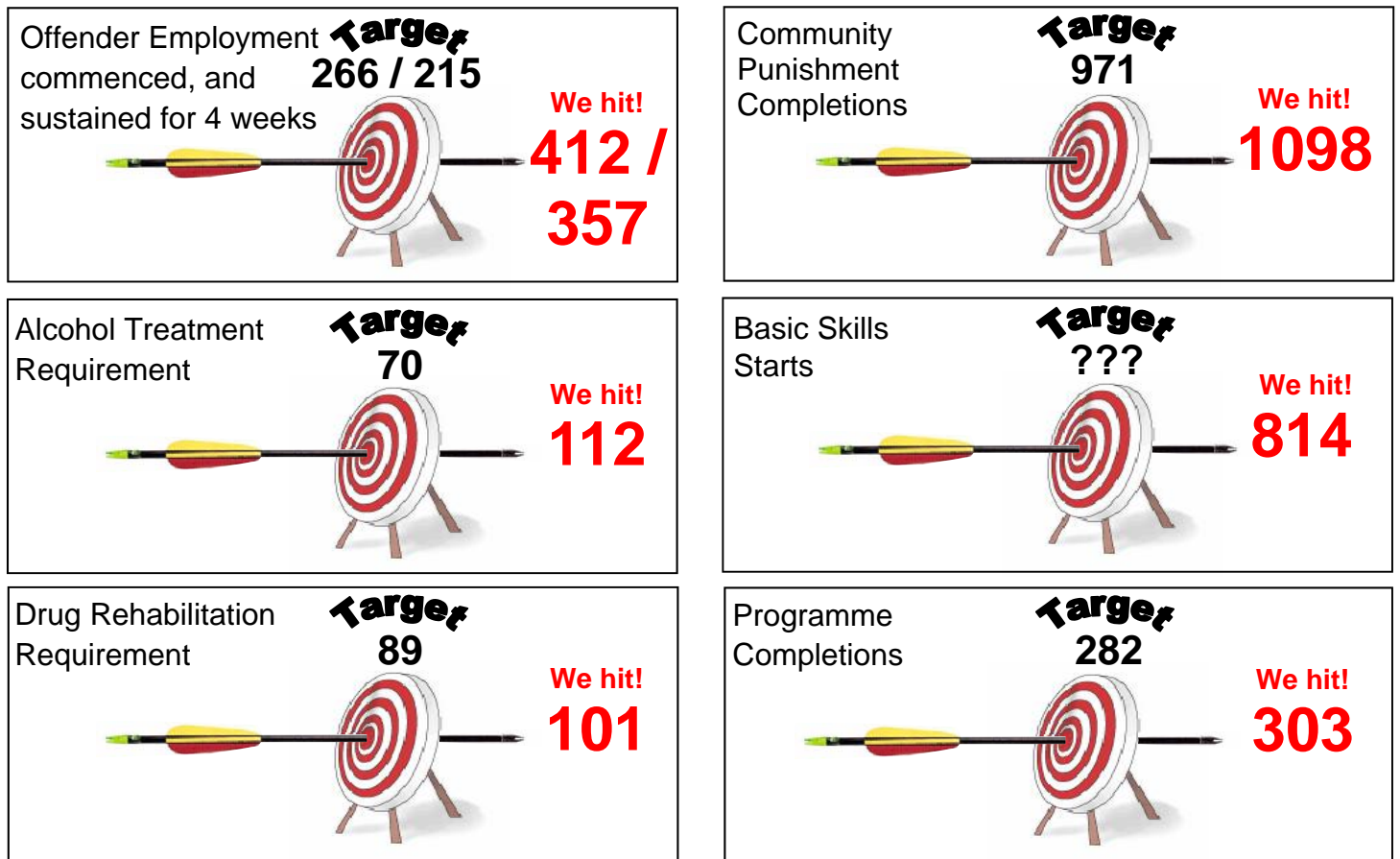


Staff Employed 405
 Based on Full Time Equivalent (FTE)



Our Performance

Derbyshire Probation Area achieved an overall Band 3 status in 2007/8, outperforming a number of our performance targets.



ViSOR Boosts Existing Public Protection Processes

Between October 2007 and March 2008 the Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) database was introduced into all Probation Areas. The Derbyshire implementation period was from November 2007 to 'going live' in January 2008.

In use with Derbyshire Constabulary since 2005, ViSOR has been implemented throughout Police forces in the UK. For the Police Service, ViSOR provides the standard national database upon which details of all Category 1 Registered Sex Offenders are recorded, along with associated operational and management activity. Being a 'confidential' system there are strict physical and data security requirements.

Extending ViSOR to the Probation and Prison Services supports public protection activity through the timely sharing of both intelligence and risk assessment and management information between the principal Multi Agency Protection Procedure agencies (MAPPA). Workers in each agency are partners to the same records.

This new data sharing process boosts the effective working of the partnership process, ensuring even better monitoring and management of high risk offenders in the community.

Business and Partnership Manager appointed

In the summer of 2007, Derbyshire Probation Area appointed a Business and Partnership Manager.

The Government set out a clear agenda to commission Probation Services from a range of providers. In August 2006 the National Offender Management Service published 'Improving Prisons and Probation Services; Public Value Partnerships'. This set out the strategic intentions for developing contestability. At the end of 2006, Derbyshire had to submit subcontracting proposals and priorities to the Regional Offender Manager. The Business and Partnership Manager post was created to take this agenda forward.

Derbyshire's initial aims were to achieve a 10% spend with the Voluntary, Community and Private sectors. The Business and Partnership Manager was appointed to develop a range of providers to deliver offender facing services on behalf of the Area and to manage subcontracted partnerships.

In undertaking this work the priorities were to ensure that there were proper contracts in place for existing services for example, offender transport, interpreters, childcare and legal services (enforcement). Throughout the process the prime consideration remained the safeguarding of the public and the retention of the highest standards in all service provision.

Whilst aspects of the Government's agenda have changed since summer 2007, the creation and maintenance of partnerships remains an important focus for the service.

Roger Hill visits Derbyshire Probation

In June 2007 Roger Hill, National Director of Probation, visited Derbyshire Probation and had lengthy and useful discussions with the Chief Officer and Assistant Chief Officers, and the Chair of the Area Board. He also met with a cross-section of staff in an open discussion about areas of concern to all.

His visit was one of many he was making around the country to gain a view of the mood of the service and the issues facing it that were of prime concern to managers and staff alike.



L to r: Steve Taylor (Board Chair), Denise White (Chief Officer) and Roger Hill

Burdett Lodge tops in East Midlands area

In 2007, Burdett Lodge came out top of all Approved Premises in the East Midlands region on Performance Improvement Standards. The assessment, completed with the help of a member of Leicestershire Probation, scored Burdett at 29 points from a possible 30.

Also the Financial Regularity audit report, which includes comments on the rent collection and petty cash systems at the Hostel, concluded that systems were "Well Controlled".

Award-winning partnership's continued success

The partnership between Derbyshire Probation Unpaid Work Teams and Derby College's Broomfield Hall that won the national Butler Trust Award in 2006/7 for Training continued to achieve success. On Sunday 13th May, 2007 a team of offenders was entered in the regional heat of the national UK Skills landscaping competition, intermediate level, held at Reaseheath College, Cheshire.



From this.... to this, in 6 hours



Winning, the team scored sufficiently highly to earn a place in the UK Intermediate final held on 4th July, again at Reaseheath. The team was the first part-time group ever to enter the competition.

The task of the four-man team of offenders was to construct a garden from scratch in just six hours. Working in terrible weather conditions of pouring rain, the team completed their project, laying a lawn, building a fence and wall, and creating a shrubbery. They were assessed all through the process, not just on the finished work, and also on their construction skills and team-work.

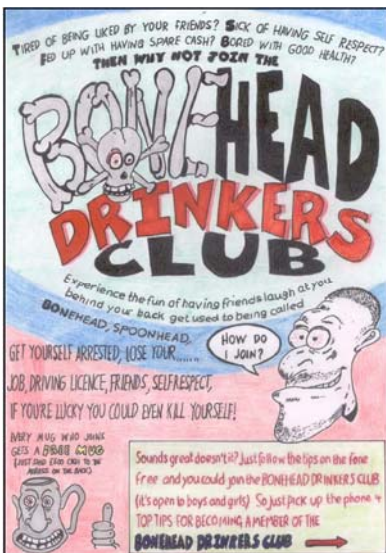
One judge was so impressed with the standard of their work that he said that he would be happy for them to work on his garden any time.

Gaining employment skills is an important step for offenders and the ability to get and hold a job is a significant factor in enabling offenders to avoid re-offending and become useful members of society. The joint project with Derby College enables offenders to gain a City & Guilds certificate in Horticulture.

Offender Arts Competition

Now approaching its fourth year, Derbyshire Probation's annual Arts Competition continues to grow. In 2007/8 a number of winning entries were entered in national competitions such as the Koestler Arts Competition in London. As ever, the best

entries are made into posters and flyers to encourage offenders to rethink their lifestyles and the impact crime has on themselves, their friends and family and their community. We encourage entries of all standards. What matters is the thought process that results in the painting, poem or story.



RICHES TO RAGS

From riches to rags
 In just one year
 Licking crack
 Tooting gear
 Friends I had
 Walk on by
 Never stop
 Never say hi
 Sold my house
 Sold my car
 If not for drugs
 I would have gone far



Once again we have worked with Derbyshire Crimebeat to compile a booklet to be delivered to all secondary schools in Derbyshire and to Youth organisations, to promote Crimebeat's own Youth Art Competition - also about the effects of crime.

Offenders gain self esteem and confidence from entering our competition, factors which help them to re-evaluate their lives and strive to reform.

New Board keen to support Area's quality service provision

April 2007 saw the retirement of several Board members, having fulfilled their terms of office, and the appointment of seven new members, including a new Chair.

With backgrounds ranging from Probation and the Police to Education and Charity executive roles, they have brought a wealth of experience and acumen to add to that of the existing members to support the Service in meeting the challenges it continues to face.

The new Board quickly established itself and has proved to be keenly interested in the work of the Service. A very active Board, it meets approximately every eight weeks and also focuses on specific aspects of Derbyshire's operations through Panels of Board members and senior officers.

Shortly after his appointment, Steve Taylor, the new Board Chair, commented on the service and its staff:

" I am massively impressed by all of you. Your dedication, passion and professionalism do you all great credit. This shows in the performance results which saw us achieving almost all our targets (in 2006/7)"

Whilst national focus changed through the year, the Board was determined to lead the Area towards Trust status, should the benefits be proven, and the resulting focus on performance has led to the Area achieving Band 3 status at the end of 2007/8 - something we just missed out on in 2006/7.

Offender Management Inspection confirms quality of work

In June 2007 Derbyshire was inspected by the central Offender Management team and the resulting report found many positive things to say about the Area.

Derbyshire was praised for its practitioner commitment to offenders, the good standard of pre-sentence reports (informing court sentencing decisions), and its good planning processes and leadership. Inter-agency work was also praised, for demonstrating effective collaboration with agencies both within the criminal justice system and beyond.

The full Inspection report received in September 2007 has provided Derbyshire with opportunity to expand upon examples of best practice across the area and to review all aspects of offender management. A process which continues through 2008.

In his forward to the report, HM Chief Inspector of Probation states that "Derbyshire Probation Area has in place sophisticated planning processes and its leaders take care to give clear leadership." and that "Practitioners show commitment to the offenders with whom they work."



Below are examples from the dozens of projects from around the county carried out each year by offenders as part of their Unpaid Work Requirement.

Offenders can be sentenced to carry out between 40 and 300 hours of Unpaid Work.



Unpaid Work carried out under the national Community Payback scheme helps dozens of communities in Derbyshire each year.



Projects must benefit the local community and take many forms. This past year we have renovated allotments, created ponds, gardens and pathways for schools, undertaken litter picks, re-decorated charity shops, cleared overgrown public areas, helped with mass planting of spring bulbs, worked on conservation and community safety projects and helped maintain churchyards across the county.

We work with local councils, community safety partnerships and voluntary and community bodies, often on projects which otherwise might not be undertaken.

Not only does Community Payback involve hard physical work in all weathers, but offenders also learn from the experience. As well as practical skills they improve their social skills and their team-working abilities and practice problem solving skills - all of value in helping them avoid re-offending and reintegrate in to society.

In 2007/8 we supervised over 165,600 hours of unpaid work, worth over £886,000 to local communities

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