

## Teacher's Notes

### ***Aren't you the people who organise offenders to clean up rubbish and graffiti?***

Yes, but that's not all we do.

### ***So who are you?***

As one of 42 probation areas in England and Wales, our aims are protecting the public; reducing re-offending; the proper punishment of offenders in the community; the rehabilitation of offenders and ensuring that offenders are aware of the effects of their crime on the victims of crime. To do this we work in close partnership with both statutory and voluntary sector bodies.

Based at ten locations in Derbyshire, and with teams working in Foston and Sudbury prisons, our 400 staff supervise some 4000 offenders each year. Each offender has one manager throughout his or her supervision. This enables us to build a productive relationship, and contributes to a greater likelihood of the offender successfully completing their sentence and being less likely to re-offend.

### ***And what exactly do you do?***

We do supervise offenders undertaking unpaid work, and in the past year we have supervised over 165,600 hours of work throughout Derbyshire, worth almost £886,000 to local communities. It remains an important aspect of our work. But there are other activities which, though less well-known, are equally important.

We have dedicated staff working with the Courts to prepare reports to assist sentencing decisions and to advise on matters such as the likelihood of re-offending and appropriate possible sentencing options. Last year we provided over 4,700 reports to courts across the county.

Probation staff also work closely with prisons, having contact with prisoners sentenced for more than 12 months, from the time they are sentenced, through to managing their supervision on release. In prison, we provide programmes to address offenders' behaviour and attitude, produce reports and provide prison governors with recommendations on matters such as home detention, curfews and resettlement on release, to assist in the determining of release licence conditions.

### ***The Unpaid Work. Isn't it just a bit of a let off for offenders?***

Far from it. Offenders can be sentenced to between 40 and 300 hours service, as well as having to comply with other elements of their orders. The work is physical, undertaken in all weathers and takes away from their free time each week. We also incorporate training, enhancing their problem-solving skills, ability to work as a team, and sometimes enabling them to gain practical skills such as in painting and decorating or horticulture. We run Unpaid Work sessions every day of the week. All the work benefits the local communities and helps realise projects that sometimes might not be undertaken.

### ***So how do you help reduce re-offending?***

We provide a number of specially-designed programmes to help change offenders' behaviour. Subjects include Controlling Anger, addressing Domestic Abuse, Drink Impaired Driving, Alcohol Abuse, Drug Abuse, and work with sex offenders.

We also provide Basic Skills training in numeracy and literacy, to increase the possibility of getting offenders into employment. It is a sad fact that the education level of many offenders is only equal to that of the average 10 year old. In 2007/8 814 offenders started basic skills courses.

For those medium or high risk offenders who have a faulty approach to problem solving, we provide an Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS) programme to develop their social interaction and problem-solving skills.

### ***And the really serious offenders?***

With the most serious violent and sex offenders, Derbyshire Probation works closely with partners such as the Police, Children's Services, Housing organisations and Health Authorities, devising multi agency public protection agreements (MAPPAs). These intensive supervision plans are designed to minimise the risk to the public from offenders released back in to the community.

### ***What about hostels?***

We run one Hostel in Derby. This provides not only secure accommodation and a high level of supervision for offenders, but staff also encourage positive change in the individual. We also work with housing organisations to assist offenders in settling back into the community.

### ***Do you work just with offenders?***

No. Work with victims is a very important aspect of our role. Our specially-trained Victim Liaison Officers (VLOs) organise contact with, and support for, individuals and their families who are victims of serious crime. We enable the victim to raise concerns whilst being kept apprised of an offender's progress throughout their sentence. On behalf of the victim, we are able to ask for extra conditions to a release licence, such as prohibiting contact with the victim, or excluding the offender from certain areas. Our VLOs maintain close contact with the Police and victim support organisations.

Our Women's Safety Workers support victims of domestic abuse, where the perpetrator is attending our IDAP programme.

In 2007/08 Derbyshire Probation:

- Employed over 400 full and part time staff
  - Operated from 12 sites across the county from Ilkeston to Glossop; Derby to Chesterfield
  - Provided probation teams in Sudbury Prison (all female) and Foston Hall Prison
  - Supervised over 3,800 offenders
  - of whom over 2,200 were given community orders
  - of whom 11% were female and 10% were registered as BME
  - Provided over £34,000 of Interpreter services for offenders in over 20 languages
  - Provided over 4,700 reports to courts across Derbyshire
  - Supervised over 165,600 hours of unpaid work under the Community Payback scheme
  - Worth almost £886,000 to local communities
- The average length of Unpaid Work requirement set by Derbyshire courts was 104 hours

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