



Ministry of
JUSTICE

National Offender
Management Service

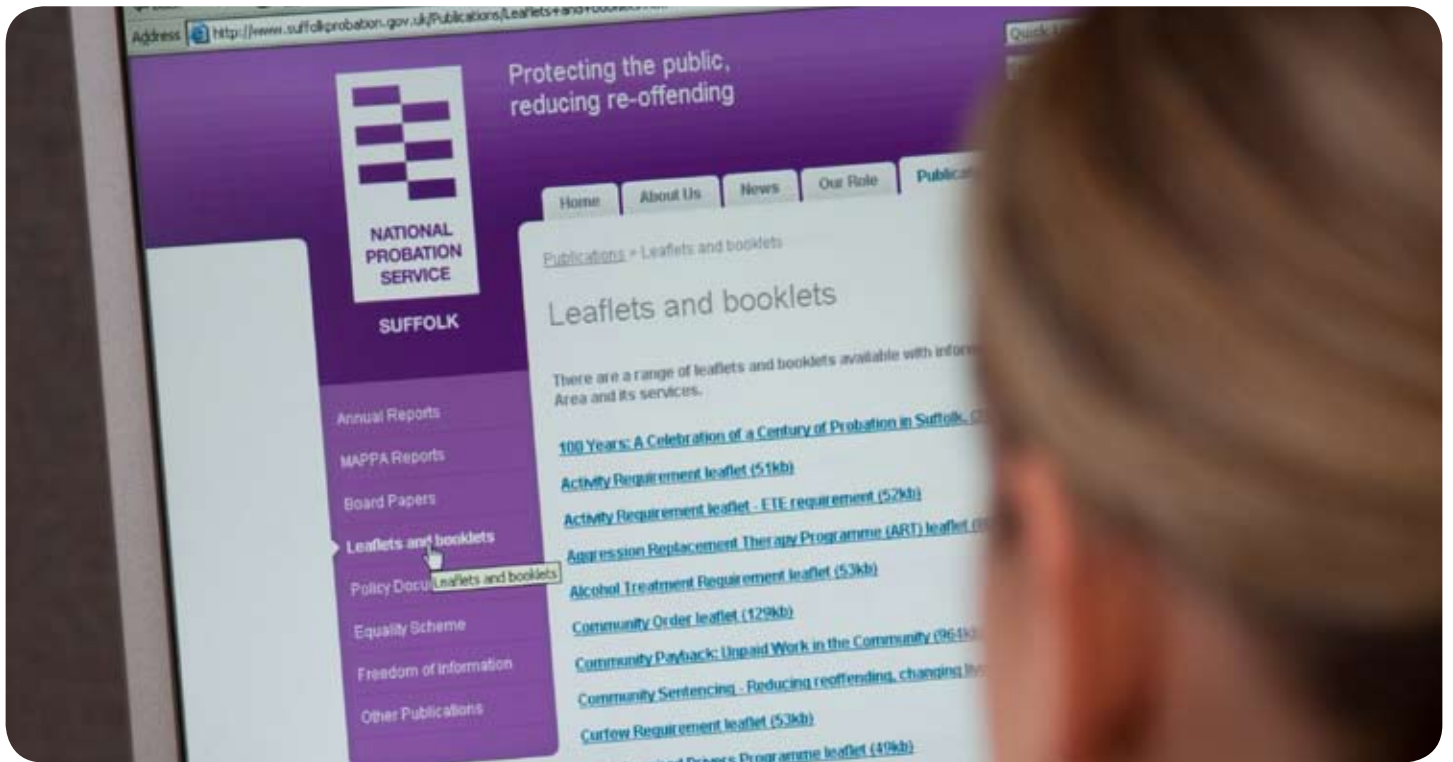
SUFFOLK PROBATION AREA



ANNUAL REVIEW 2008-2009

Protecting the public
Reducing re-offending





What does probation do?

Suffolk Probation plays a key part in making our county a safe place to live and yet not many people know what we do.

Everything we do at Suffolk Probation is aimed at protecting the public and reducing re-offending, or, put another way, keeping people safe and cutting crime. Everyone knows how the police keep people safe and cut crime, but not many people realise that this is the role of probation too.

Once offenders have been sentenced by the courts or released on licence from prison, we do everything we can to make sure they turn their lives around so they are no longer a threat to society. We want offenders to face up to the factors that made them commit crime and to try to change them. We help offenders to lead more settled, regular lives, with steady accommodation and a job. We work with partners in the community to assist them to overcome drug and alcohol problems. If we can get all of this into place there is less chance of an offender committing another crime.

We have rigorous risk assessment procedures so we can monitor the level of risk offenders pose to the public – and in some cases we send them back to prison if we think that risk is too high.

Through us, offenders can make amends to society. We run Community Payback projects where teams of offenders supervised by Suffolk Probation Area carry out work in the community. There is probably a churchyard, playground or village hall near you which has benefited from offenders' hard work. Let us know if there is some work you would like them to do in your neighbourhood.

Suffolk Probation Area also works with courts and victims. We advise courts on the best sentence for offenders through pre sentence reports. When offenders are sent to prison for 12 months or more after committing a violent or sexual offence, we offer victims the opportunity to have regular updates throughout the sentence and a say on what happens when the offender is released from prison.

We help offenders to change their lives for the better, but probation is not a soft option. If offenders do not co-operate and complete their community sentence correctly or if they break conditions of their release from prison licence we will send them back to court or prison for breach.

Protecting the public
Reducing re-offending

What we did to get a top performance rating

The probation service, in common with other public sector organisations, is given a set of targets by the Government. In 2008/09 Suffolk Probation Area was given the top “Green Star” rating after meeting or exceeding most of our targets.

Key Suffolk Probation performance facts 2008/09

- 163 offenders supervised by us sustained employment for four weeks
- 46% of offenders were in employment at the end of their order or licence
- 80% of offenders were living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence
- 70% of orders and licences completed successfully
- 77% of cases reached the six-month stage without requiring breach action
- 97% of breach proceedings initiated within 10 working days of relevant unacceptable failure to comply
- 20 sex offender treatment programmes (courses) completed
- 40 domestic violence programmes (courses) completed
- 155 other offending behaviour programmes (courses) completed
- 47 offenders successfully completed a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement
- 12 offenders successfully completed an Alcohol Treatment Requirement (new last year)
- 704 Unpaid Work (Community Payback) orders were completed
- 1,828 pre sentence reports were produced for the courts

Suffolk Probation Area workload facts:

On 31 March 2009 Suffolk Probation Area was managing:

- 1,597 community sentences
- 849 offenders released on licence from prison



A message from John Budd, Chief Officer, Suffolk Probation Area

I always maintain that if probation did not exist already it would have to be invented. I am sure that once you have read this review of the work done by Suffolk Probation Area, you will agree. Our work can touch every part of an offender's life in an effort to stop him or her from committing more crime. We can put an offender's life back on track. Through us they can overcome problems with alcohol, drugs or anger; find somewhere suitable to live; improve their education and skills; get a job; and improve their relationships with friends and family.

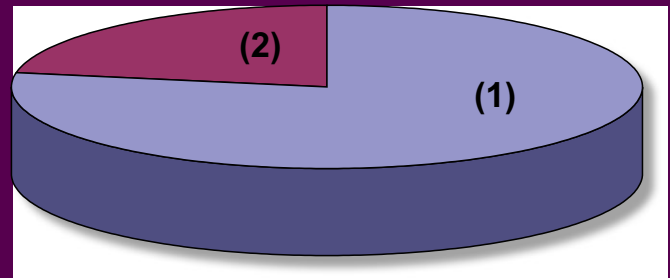
To work in probation you have to believe that people have the capacity to change. Offenders given community sentences or released from prison into our supervision have been given the chance to put right what they have done wrong – and it is a tough call. To get through their probation supervision they must work hard. They may have to face up to problems in their lives that they have been trying to blot out for years. They could be faced with hard physical labour to complete their Community Payback. It is no wonder that many offenders reflect that it would have been easier to go to prison than meet our demands.

I am very proud of the work done by the dedicated staff of Suffolk Probation Area, not only with offenders, but with victims, courts and behind the scenes, running the service. In the last year, we achieved the top performance rating, Green Star, despite working in a difficult operating environment, with financial pressures and organisational change. I am confident that as Suffolk Probation Area prepares to merge with Norfolk Probation Area, the service my staff provide to the people of Suffolk will continue to be excellent.

How much did it all cost?

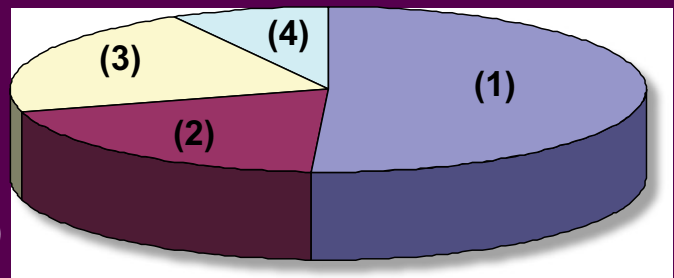
Net administration costs 2008/09 -

Staff Costs £7,458,000 77.74% (1)
Other Costs £2,135,000 22.26% (2)
Total £9,593,000 100%



Breakdown of other costs -

Accommodation, maintenance and utilities £1,088,000 50.96% (1)
Offender Costs £418,000 19.58% (2)
Supplies and services £456,000 21.36% (3)
Other administration costs £173,000 8.10% (4)



Community Payback: offenders working for you in Suffolk

Offenders supervised by Suffolk Probation Area completed 117,663 hours of Community Payback work in the towns, villages and communities of Suffolk in 2008/09. That is the equivalent of nearly £675,000 of labour and yet it is a service which is offered free of charge, other than costs of materials.

Community Payback, as the name suggests, gives offenders the opportunity to payback to the communities that were affected by their crimes.

Anyone can nominate some work for Community Payback offenders to do. To be considered, your project must benefit the whole community and be challenging, demanding, worthwhile and constructive. It must not take paid work away from others and no one should make a profit out of the work.

Community Payback teams, overseen by Suffolk Probation Area trained supervisors, have made a big difference all over the county in the last year.

Projects have included:

- Landscaping work at St Andrew's Church, Great Cornard
- Decorating the sports pavilion and village hall, tending the churchyard and carrying out work for two charities in Corton
- Building a community garden at Maidenhall Allotments, Ipswich
- Painting and decorating Botesdale village hall, Lowestoft scout hut, Kirkley Mission, Age Concern Ipswich, and Capel School.
- Clearance work at Playford Village Hall, Broadlands residential home and Colneis School swimming pool, Felixstowe.
- Individual offenders have worked in charity shops across the county.

If you want to suggest a Community Payback project, fill in an online form on our website www.suffolkprobation.gov.uk.

Suffolk Probation to join forces with Norfolk

Suffolk Probation Area is merging with Norfolk Probation to become a single probation trust.

All probation boards in England and Wales must apply to become probation trusts. The boards of Norfolk and Suffolk decided they could most successfully achieve trust status by joining forces. From April 2010, the new joint trust will provide probation services to both counties. The full merger between the two organisations is expected to take up to three years.

Norfolk and Suffolk Probation Areas already have much in common, with similarities in size, structure, culture and levels of performance. As the two organisations merge, some posts will be lost, however frontline operational jobs will be protected as much as possible.

By joining forces, the new probation trust can take what is best from both organisations and apply it in both counties. The public can be reassured that the new trust will continue to provide excellent probation services to the offenders, courts, communities, prisons and victims of Norfolk and Suffolk.

Suffolk Probation Area: Success Stories

Alcohol Treatment Requirement a big hit in Suffolk

A Suffolk offender is determined to turn his life around after successfully completing an Alcohol Treatment Requirement as part of a community sentence ordered by the court for an offence relating to drunken behaviour in public.

Jim was so impressed with the Alcohol Treatment Requirement, during which he had to attend regular sessions with addiction treatment service NORCAS, that he self-referred himself when it had finished in order to benefit from their continuing support. His offender manager has helped him with housing and accommodation problems.

With regular supervision and support, Jim has managed to drastically reduce his drinking. He has filled the empty void that drove him to drink with a determined quest to get work, either paid or voluntary.

Probation programme helps offenders keep calm

A group of offenders who completed a course aimed at combating aggression are confident it has helped them change their lives for the better.

The group of nine offenders who did the Aggression Replacement Training Programme, as part of a community sentence ordered by the court, are determined to use the methods they have learned to keep a level head in potentially difficult situations.

Ken said at the end of the programme that he had not lost his temper for several weeks and now uses humour to diffuse potentially angry situations.

Brian said he thinks more about possible consequences and is learning to take a step back and take a different perspective.

Gavin said he had changed his attitude and the way he thought about things and that he did not want to go back to his offending lifestyle.

Charity delighted with work of Community Payback offenders

A charity set up to restore an open air swimming pool in Ipswich is delighted with work carried out by Community Payback offenders supervised by Suffolk Probation Area.

The Broomhill Trust were so pleased with work offenders have done at Broomhill Pool that they organised a visit from the Mayor of Ipswich, David Goldsmith, to the project to see offenders at work.

Mark Ling, of the Broomhill Trust, said: "We're absolutely delighted by what is happening here. The offenders are improving the buildings both inside and out and generally helping to ensure the pool is well-maintained while we go through the process of building a business plan for the pool.

Offenders started work at the pool on a Sunday work party in May.

They have cleared and weeded the ground, changing rooms and children's pool and redecorated.

Drugs Rehabilitation Requirement sets offender onto the road to recovery

An offender is now in college studying hairdressing after successfully completing a Drugs Rehabilitation Requirement managed by Suffolk Probation Area.

Liz was sentenced to a Community Order with a 12 month Drugs Rehabilitation Requirement and 24 months supervision.

The Drugs Rehabilitation Requirement is a tough sentence. Offenders must attend a drug treatment centre five days a week for up to 16 weeks, followed by up to three after care sessions a week for the rest of their sentence. They must also have regular drugs tests and supervision with their offender manager who will concentrate on improving their education skills and job prospects.

After a rocky start – she was breached three months in and received an extra two months supervision - Liz started to turn her life around. She went through a full programme at a drug treatment centre and completed her Drugs Rehabilitation Requirement successfully.

Through Suffolk Probation, she achieved the skills necessary to get into college and started a hairdressing course, with financial help from the Prince's Trust.

Offender tackles his domestic violence problem

An offender from Ipswich put down his ability to turn his life around to the specialist interventions he received from Suffolk Probation Area.

Kevin came under the supervision of Suffolk Probation when he was released from prison, where he had been serving an extended public protection sentence, after being convicted of a domestic violence offence.

He was put on the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) – a course aimed at showing him how to avoid domestic violence - and had to abide by many stringent licence conditions, including regular supervision with a probation officer.

Kevin responded well to the work his probation officer did with him. "He didn't just talk the talk, he really engaged in everything," she said. In his first year he got and maintained a job and has improved his relationship with his children.

Kevin said that the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme gave him the structure to think through his own problems.

For more information about Suffolk Probation Area, including current vacancies, news, publications and more details about what we do, visit our website www.suffolkprobation.gov.uk.

A copy of the full Suffolk Probation Area Annual Report is on our website or can be obtained from Juliette Maxam, Suffolk Probation Area, Peninsular House, 11-13 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP4 1AQ.