

NEWS



Kill the Bill!



Stop TTIP
Page 2



HMI Probation Annual Report
Page 6



Family Court FoCuS
Page 7

The Government have unveiled their Trade Union Bill, which is far more vicious than first trailed and is an extension and deepening of anti-union laws. It is absolutely essential that Napo joins with all other trade unions in opposing these laws

The proposals include measures, in effect, to criminalise union representatives who organise picket lines but they go far beyond this in restricting the ability of unions to carry out their basic functions.

At the moment it is a civil offence to go outside the guideline of no more than six pickets to be on the gates during a strike. This will now be designated a criminal offence. The measures include the obligation to give the police the name of the person organising the picket line, and they could end up in prison as a result.

Other measures proposed in the new legislation include:

- A right for the employers to hire agency workers to break strikes.
- A double threshold for unions in transport, health, education and other parts of

the public sector. First, they have to get at least a 50% turnout of those entitled to vote (which every union will now have to do even if not in these sectors). The union has to tell the employer exactly who they will be asking to strike and where exactly they work. Then at least 40% of all those entitled to vote must vote for action.

An example given in the Guardian said that if 100 teachers were asked to strike then at least 50 have to vote. Of those at least 40 have to vote for strike action, i.e. 80% have to be in favour of strike action.

- There will have to be a fresh strike ballot at least every four months.
- Two weeks' notice of strike action has to be given, allowing management plenty of time to hire a legal strike-breaking workforce through agencies.
- They propose to dramatically cut union facility time across the whole of the public sector - they have already started this in the civil service.

Continued on next page

Kill the Bill!

Continued from previous page

- They also propose to cut the unions' ability to have political funds. Not just those who give money to the Labour Party (some £25 million a year at the moment) but all political funds whether affiliated to the Labour Party or not.
- In a breath-taking move they are also proposing to introduce a levy to make the unions pay for the government's "certification officer" – who is responsible for policing the anti-trade union laws. It is akin to making the prisoner pay the wages of his jailer!
- They propose to make it more difficult and bureaucratic for reps to obtain facility time to carry out legitimate trade union duties such as casework for members facing disciplinary proceedings.

Scandalously, this will include time off for Health and Safety representatives who up until now have been exempt from restrictions because of the need to act immediately where the welfare of staff is at risk.

We have already seen how vindictive this Government (and its ConDem predecessor) can be with the attack on our ability

to collect members subscriptions through the ending of check-off in the NPS. If the Government get their way trade unions will risk either becoming outlaws or little more than bystanders as employers will have free reign to impose whatever draconian measures they choose without fear of opposition. We cannot afford to let that happen.

Napo will be part of the TUC's campaign against the Bill and we urge members to become actively involved. As an affiliate of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN), for example, we will be attending a lobby of the TUC in Brighton on 13 September that calls for a national demonstration on the day the Government takes its Bill to Parliament in the Autumn. We urge branches to support any local protests and initiatives aimed at highlighting the damage this Bill could do.

Chas Berry
National Vice Chair



Stop TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) treaty

'TTIP needs to be on every Probation meeting agenda and opposition has to be total' wrote Suzanne McCarthy, retired Napo member in a letter to Napo News earlier this year – in response to an article she read in the magazine last year 'TTIP and the threat to probation services'.

The fundamental campaign against TTIP that Suzanne calls for is now well under way, almost 2.5 million people in the European Union have signed a petition against this deal that will force governments to put public services – such as the NHS – out to tender.

Despite this level of opposition the EU have trampled over the views of its citizens. In July social democrat MEPs split over a vote on TTIP, when the European Parliament voted by 436 to 241 in favour of a motion on establishing a corporate court to deal with the controversial Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) aspect of the proposed treaty. This clause allows any investor to sue a government

if the investor feels they are being blocked from making profit in cases where they feel they have not had 'fair and equitable' treatment, including health and safety standards. It effectively elevates transnational capital to a status equivalent to the nation-state itself, and threatens to undermine the most basic principles of democracy in the EU and USA alike. The TUC and other trade unions around Europe backed amendments that would reject

ISDS, strengthen workers' rights, and stop TTIP being used to reduce standards.

Napo's Health and Safety Committee is concerned about the impact of TTIP on workplace safety and have written a motion to this year's Napo AGM about this. The TUC head of safety Hugh Robertson, explains the impact of TTIP on workplace safety as follows:

The two main points of concern on health and safety are the reduction in standards and the possible provisions to allow companies to sue governments in secretive

courts. TTIP could result in the harmonisation of many health and safety regulations, including chemicals, or introduce a system of mutual recognition which would have the effect of harmonising standards down to the lowest common denominator. Given that the EU has, on average, one third of the workplace fatality rate of the USA this could be devastating. In part our better safety rate is because of the stronger regulatory framework, and we need to protect, and extend that.

Family Court and probation members have good reason to oppose TTIP. The treaty will destroy the basic premise of the welfare state. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 provides for the most lucrative parts of health and social care provision to be privatised – all part of establishing a two-tier welfare system where the rich pay for high-quality services while the poor are left with substandard and badly resourced services.

Discussions around TTIP are concluded at the end of 2015. So we don't have much time to stop the treaty. Please sign the European Citizens' Initiative 'Stop TTIP' petition, take part in the European Day of Action against TTIP on 10 October, lobby your MP and MEP and support the motion on TTIP from Health and Safety committee at this year's Napo AGM.

Sarah Friday
Napo National Official (health and safety)



Ian Lawrence writes



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Proportional representation – The long road ahead starts at Brighton

This month's Trade Union Congress will see two important Napo motions feature in the debates.

The first is on the need to strengthen the existing processes and accountability mechanisms on child safeguarding, and how the authorities can better protect young people against harm and abuse. It's right up there in terms of being a key professional issue that will find resonance amongst our members in Probation and Cafcass, and hopefully the wider public following the horrendous revelations from the Rotherham inquiry last year.

Our second motion on Electoral Reform (see below) seeks the support of the TUC to commission independent research and use this to campaign more widely for change. It is certainly a radical departure from those that we normally submit; but the Officers and NEC supported my recommendation that a new debate needs to be started within the trade union movement and the UK electorate on what is (and always has been) a highly controversial issue.

Sour grapes syndrome?

Defenders of Britain's 'first past the post' electoral system (FPTP) will always claim that it has served us well and will not unreasonably ask: if it isn't broken why fix it?

Yet the advocates for change seem to have more in their locker these days, especially in light of the unexpected result of this year's General Election which saw the Tory party secure a 12 seat Parliamentary majority after receiving just 25% of the popular vote.

But the issues about participation and the mandate to govern run deeper than just this single depressing statistic. Firstly, it is

the case that more of the UK electorate failed to bother to vote for anyone as opposed to those who actually did. Naturally this ought to be causing all political parties to reflect on their engagement strategies and how they can create clear water between each other so as to attract the 'they are all the same' tendency. Yet it is also

a fact that many people patently refuse to shore up a discredited and tired system that was essentially designed to cater for a two party governance structure which no longer reflects the diverse demographics and voting preferences within many constituencies.

Critics of FPTP point to the fact that any system which sees a candidate returned on Bottom of Form

a low percentage vote, which only has to be higher than any other candidate, is ridiculous. It has been widely reported how some MP's were returned to parliament in this year's general election despite having the backing of just 16% of voters. This is a result of the move away from the two party system as evidenced by the way in which Ukip, the Greens and SNP gained from traditional Tory or Labour voters but in the case of the first two parties failed to translate that into more than two seats.

Is there a solution?

Proportional representation (PR) means that if a political party receives 25% of the vote, they will have 25% of the seats in Parliament. However, this basic form of PR doesn't factor in the regional perspective which many people want to see properly reflected.

The late 1990s saw some support in favour of the system's implementation in Britain with the Liberal Democrats leading the way. Yet the 'great opportunity' for electoral reform that caused Paddy Ashdown to recommend a Coalition with the Tories in 2010, led to the ill-fated referendum in 2011 to decide whether or not to move to an alternative voting system (a result of a bill introduced by the Lib Dems).

This exercise which was widely seen as something of a 'damp squib' saw just 42.2% turn out to vote with 68% against and 32% in favour. Critics claim that there was insufficient time and discussion for the debate

about which system would replace the current one. Some might argue that this time the stakes are higher.

The possible answer, which seems to be gaining increasing popularity, is the Mixed Member Proportional system (MMP) where voters indicate a preference for a political party and one for a parliamentary candidate (their constituency representative). Prospective MPs stand in constituencies as they do now, but there would also be a proportional number of Parliamentary seats available to the parties based on their percentage of the vote. This presents the likelihood that candidates from parties seen as 'extremist' may get through, but it's often held that the only realistic way to expose such people is to engage them in open debate.

It will be a long hard road from Brighton to electoral Nirvana and it may take decades if not a generation or two to bring about change. Nevertheless, we will be arguing that the quest for real democracy cannot wait any longer.

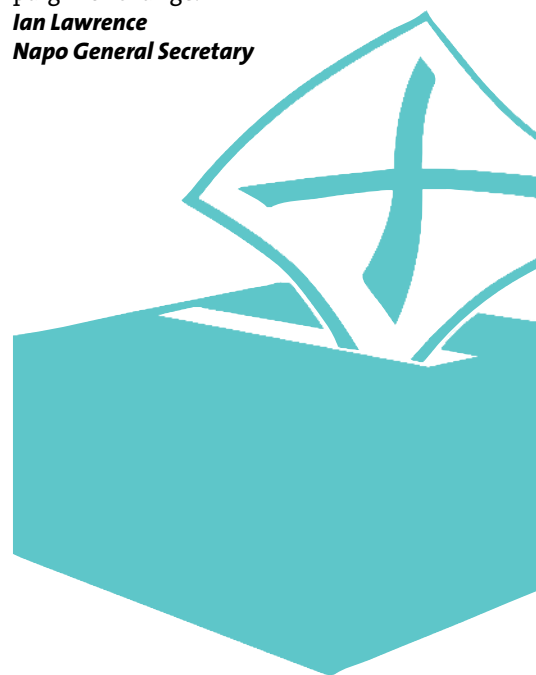
Electoral Reform

The outcome of the 2015 election in terms of the share of Parliamentary seats in comparison to the votes received by the participating parties indicates that the British electoral system is no longer fit for purpose.

Congress instructs the General Council to commission independent research which would consider how this inequitable situation has developed and the options for change.

The General Council are to report back by the 2016 Congress with recommendations which would form part of a wider campaign for change.

Ian Lawrence
Napo General Secretary



Who wouldn't want peace in the Middle East?

This year at AGM in Eastbourne, members will have the opportunity to decide whether or not this trade union should affiliate to Trade Union Friends of Israel (TUFU).

What is TUFU?

TUFU was established to strengthen and support the links between the Histadrut (the Israeli TUC), the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) and the British Trade Union Movement. The Histadrut maintains a good relationship with the PGFTU as well as labour movements in other countries. It is affiliated to the International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICTU).

TUFU supports a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine that delivers peace, economic progress, security and justice for both nations. TUFU works to encourage the British Trade Union Movement to play a positive role in improving the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis. TUFU engages with progressive forces advocating peace,



social justice and human rights. It seeks to emphasize the diversity of Israeli society, striving for full equality regardless of ethnicity, religion or gender.

TUFU believes that it is right for unions around the world to be discussing the plight of the Palestinians and seeking ways to provide assistance to them. But that support for Palestinians should not be counter-productive to the situation on the ground and the ongoing peace process. Rather than supporting divestment from Israel, TUFU believes that investment of time, energy and material aid is the way to meaningful progress towards achieving a lasting settlement.

TUFU believes that calling for boycotts of Israel is not the right approach for a trade union. The economic relationship between the Palestinian and Israeli economies is

vitaly important to the peace process. Economic boycotts against Israel can only damage this. A stable relationship between the Palestinian and Israeli economies, with good trade links, is crucial for the peace process to succeed. From a trade union perspective, Histadrut is of the view that the resolution to the conflict will involve an economic as much as a political settlement.

TUFU believes that the Palestinian economy needs to develop a dependable economic and trading relationship with Israel. Calls for a boycott of Israel, by aspiring to weaken Israel's economy, would be counterproductive. It would have a detrimental effect on the Palestinian economy, the peace process, and fundamentally, the Palestinian people. As a trade union, if Napo wishes to become involved in international affairs, it should do so by affiliating to international trade union movements. TUFU is an organization that works with both Israeli and Palestinian Trade Unions.

There are many political pressure groups which seek to affect change in the policies of the Israeli Government. There are many Israelis who would no more wish to be associated with the policies of their government than I would wish to be associated with the policies of this government.

The Community Union, USDAW and the POA are currently affiliated to TUFU. Let us consider properly whether or not to follow their example.

Let us have an open and honest debate at this year's AGM.

Pat Waterman
Greater London Branch

NPS sickness statistics

Napo reps on the NPS national safety committee are continuing to plug away in pressing NOMS for meaningful sickness stats to discuss at this meeting – we have been trying to get this information for nearly a year now. At the last meeting NOMS agreed to give us very basic stats (the divisional NPS safety committee meetings are being given similarly restricted information) – but we are not allowed to share these with anyone outside of the committee - and the information does not give details on why staff were off sick. So we are unable to engage constructively with the employers on addressing the issues that lead to staff sickness absence.

In July NOMS published their yearly stats on sickness 2014/15 as part of their annual report. This showed that the highest sickness absence levels were in the Midlands on 13.4 and lowest was in the North West on 10.1 days (average working days lost per full time equivalent staff). This information needs to be considered alongside number of staff in each division. The average working days lost was reported at 11.9 for the year but again this information doesn't give any detail as why people were off sick and it isn't broken down by quarter.

Earlier this year the Ministry of Justice provided an answer to a Napo initiated written parliamentary question that showed there seemed to be an uplift in the number of days lost to sickness since May 2014, compared to the same months in pre-

vious years.

It is standard practice that such complete sickness absence data is shared with the trade union side at safety committees. And it is even standard practice in the MoJ. For instance it is shared with our Family Court safety reps at their quarterly h&s steering group meeting. NPS Managers must be given this information to help manage staff sickness.

We are particularly interested to obtain complete sickness stats so that we can fulfil our role as outlined in safety legislation of working in partnership with the employers to resolve safety and health problems in the workplace – with incomplete information we are unable to do this. We also want to see if the increase in stress levels caused by TR has been reflected in reasons given for sickness absence.

Sarah Friday
Napo National
Official (health and safety)

AGM 2015/15–17 October/Eastbourne
Register online now www.napo.org.uk



Police credit union and Napo

During my work as National Treasurer I have been made aware of the value of developing services for Napo members. These have included expanding Napo's legal, insurance and health portfolio. Not all employees of Probation and Carcass are beneficiaries of the 'so called' economic miracle hailed by the Tories which has prompted Napo to look at introducing a new member's service. One that is a more favourable alternative to the payday lenders and their equivalent who seek to take advantage of those struggling financially, and high street banks whose headline rates often do not turn out to be as advertised when credit histories are investigated.



A number of options were considered and it soon became evident that the most equitable solution was providing members with access to a credit union. Exploring the regulatory constraints and the viability requirements soon made it clear that Napo could not set up a credit union in its own right.

Thanks to our contacts with the POA and exploratory talks with the Police Credit Union, Napo is on course to be able to signpost members towards a credible and ethical source of borrowing. The Police Credit Union also offers a financially beneficial service for savers. Indeed it is a requirement that membership requires a minimum sav-

ing investment of £10 a month.

Savers benefit from the fact the PCU is a mutual organisation where profits are shared with members through the dividends. The PCU has over 22,000 members and has a sound record in encouraging financial responsibility among its membership. They will take time to ensure the member access the correct product as there is no incentive from commission to push any product.

There are sufficient safeguards to ensure there is sensible lending and there is an ethos of supporting members to achieve financial security rather than lending on the basis of meeting a target, as some high street banks are prone to do. There is no

arrangement or early redemption fee and the average loan is £5,000

Once the Credit Union becomes available to Napo, members will be able to access the service through the Napo web site and become part of a virtual branch. This provides members with access to a dedicated member of staff who will be able to deal with concerns and enquiries

Repayments

Repayment of loans and monthly investments in savings will ideally be deducted from Salary and the facility is already available for NPS staff. Part of the prepara-

tory work for the anticipated launch at this year's AGM will be the setting up of the same facility for staff employed in CRC's and Cafcass.

Far from opposing deductions from salary in the lead up to the recent general election the Government has issued guidance about encouraging these to take place in an effort to encourage savings and increased access to affordable finance. Such an arrangement was apparently being openly encouraged within the Ministry of Defence.

The ethos of pay roll deductions was also supported in the guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals while extolling the benefit of a credit union.

Along with other financial institutions the PCU is subject to the Financial Services Authority and has a Governing body which is accountable to its membership at its AGM.

Board members have responsibilities as the Union, and they are financially liable for any misconduct or financial failure.

There are a number of benefits for members which are not offered by other lenders making the PCU an attractive option to Napo members. These include loan repayments which include an element of insurance and protects members in two ways. Loans are written off for members if they pass away before their 70th birthday providing peace of mind for their next of kin. For savers the beneficiaries of their estate will be repaid their total investment plus a further 100% of its value to a maximum of £25,000 if they pass away before their 60th Birthday. All these are available at no additional cost.

Anyone within in the immediate family of the members can access PCU benefits and members can continue with their financial arrangement with the PCU even after leaving their employment.

Staff employed by Napo will also be eligible to join the credit union providing they agree to be a part of the Napo branch of the credit union.

A newsletter is distributed to members of the PCU keeping them informed of developments within the Union. Currently the majority of members are Police officers reflecting the origins of the union. When the POA joined, the PCU magazine made a big push to publicise the event and highlight the fact that the fund had a broader membership base. It is presumed the same courtesy would be extended to Napo.

I look forward to keeping members informed as we move towards the expected formal launch at this year's AGM in Eastbourne.

Keith Stokeld
National Treasurer

Safety rep training

The latest in a series of Napo introductory safety reps training courses took place in July. This course for Northern based safety reps was held at the Mechanics Institute in Manchester.

It was a privilege to hold the training in such an auspicious venue – the birthplace of the TUC in 1868. We were surrounded by wonderful labour movement artefacts. It was interesting to see on display a framed document that set out the founding principles of the TUC in 1868 – and to learn that some h&s issues have still to be resolved. One of the aims of the charter was to 'regulate the hours of labour', for although we have the Working Time Directive courtesy of the European Union it is a very weak piece of legislation and many workers in the UK are still working very long hours.

We were bathed in the light from the fantastic stained glass windows donated by TUC affiliated trade unions depicting their trade union history. The course as it took place on two of the hottest days for years.

We battled through and covered issues such as safety reps rights and duties and the basics of safety legislation. Local CRC and NPS safety managers gave presentations on their organisations safety structures.

For the activity looking on risk assessment and safety reps role I gave the reps a practical example to work on asking them to look at an NPS assessment of drug testing – something members in Cumbria and Lancs (and members in other branches) were very concerned about having recently been asked to undertake for the first time. The reps were able to feed in their members concerns to the activity – which in turn I sent to the NOMS H&S manager for his consideration.

These training courses for safety reps have been very productive in brining through new safety reps needed to cover the NPS/CRC divide – so far Napo has 20 new reps as a result of the training.

Sarah Friday
Napo National Official (health and safety)

From the Chair(s)

As the Summer draws to a close, it is time to reflect on the ongoing challenges that continue to stretch our resources. It's all change at Napo HQ as staff move towards implementing Direct Debit with the removal of check-off. We are fortunate that we have been able to secure a 3 month stay of execution but this still doesn't mean we have time to sit on our heels. We would like to thank those who have already returned forms and those members who have volunteered to be champions but we still need more hands on the ground level. This is also a great opportunity to speak to non-union members and increase our density.

Additionally, we are fast moving towards conference season and we're pleased to



Yvonne Pattison and Chris Winters.

report AGM planning is going well with the Programme just getting it's finishing touches. The deadline for motions has passed and we would like to thank those members and branches who have taken the time to put together motions on a number of interesting issues. Don't forget to vote for your

favourites...remember it is the membership who dictates the order of business so have your say!

Finally, we would like to spare a thought for all members in this challenging new world, so whether you work in the NPS, you are at threat of redundancy in a Sodexo CRC, you are waiting quietly in another CRC, you are facing cuts in PBNi or you continue to work within the FCS...you are all doing the best you can in sometimes impossible circumstances and each and every one of you are what makes napo work!

We look forwards to seeing as many of you as possible in Eastbourne and for those of you who can't make it keep doing what you do best.

Chris Winters and Yvonne Pattison

HMI Probation Annual Report 2014 – 15

The annual report was published 11 August 2015 and Napo had hoped that it might give us some formal evidence to support the anecdotal evidence we have been collecting and hearing from members. However, although the report mentions an inspection carried out in 5 areas between December 2014 and Jan '15, it largely reflects back on an earlier report published in May which collated evidence from an inspection last year just after the split had occurred.

The report in May gave 67 recommendations, some of which required urgent attention, for example workload pressures on SPO's in the NPS and the lack of case oversight they are able to give to staff due them having to grapple with HR issues and non-practitioner tasks as a result of the split. Other areas of concern will come as no surprise to members; IT issues and lack of training, overly complex processes such as RSR and case allocation that are more long winded and resource intensive than previously.

It was also hoped that these issues and an update on their progress would be included in the new report. However, due to the difference in sample types (inclusion of TTG for exam-

ple) the inspectorate did not feel they were comparable and as such have not been included in the new data. Significantly, the Inspector was not able to offer much comfort to staff about the likelihood of these issues being resolved:

"Our early Transforming Rehabilitation reports highlight significant operational and information-sharing concerns across the boundaries of the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies, and continuing frustration with old case management systems. We have found probation areas that had struggled to deliver a quality service prior to Transforming Rehabilitation are now finding it hardest to adapt and cope with the reforms. The correlation between historical performance of former probation trusts and progress made with Transforming Rehabilitation implementation extended into the important issue of staff morale. This speaks to the urgent and continuing need to support the necessary improvement in the quality of leadership and management.

"However, with time and continuing goodwill I believe these transitional problems can be resolved. The much bigger challenge for 2015 and beyond will be to turn

the rhetoric of innovation and the long-advocated extension of services to short-term prisoners into hard evidence of effectiveness and reduced rates of reoffending. This will be the true test of Transforming Rehabilitation reforms."

Paul Wilson CBE

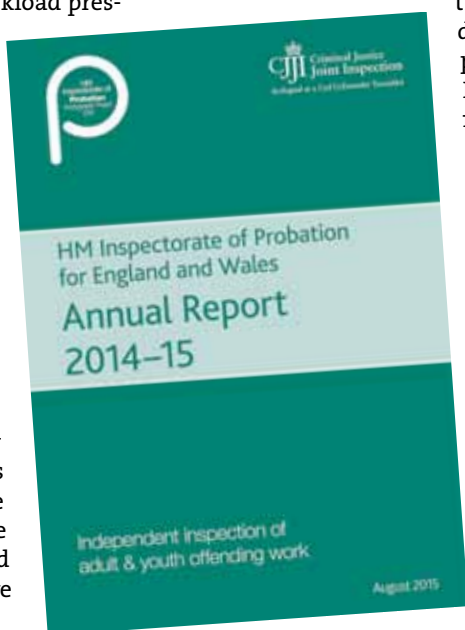
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Napo will continue to monitor, through members, progress on the following areas: IT and workarounds, workloads including tasks that are not formally measured, manager tasks and shared services, increased bureaucracy and the operating models of the new providers.

The report was quite damning about probation work in prison. 38 prisons had been inspected between April 2014-15. Very few of those did not have a backlog of Oasys assessments with most prisoners having no sentence plan or one that was out of date. It highlighted a lack of continuity with community offender managers as a direct result of the TR split. Omu staff in prisons were pulled to other tasks, possibly as a result of staff shortages and there is a significant shrinking of programme provision in prisons. Napo will work, alongside the POA to look into these issues further with a view to a possible joint campaign about prisons and probation and the impact on rehabilitation and staff.

For a full copy of the report follow this link: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/hm-inspectorate-of-probation-annual-report-2014-15-aolygi-aeth-prawf-ei-mawrhydi-adroddiad-blyny-ddol-2014-15/>

Tania Bassett
National Official



Family Court FoCuS

I have recently been giving thought to motions and annual committee reports from the Family Court Section to Napo AGM. As I was doing this, it occurred to me that nearly a year has passed since I became vice-chair and I decided that I would reflect briefly on this experience.

I was quite nervous at taking office and I have not been surprised that it has been, and continues to be, a steep learning curve. I have at times felt quite dependent for support, advice and information from my Napo colleagues, both in the Family Court Section and in the Officers and Officials group and the other staff at Napo head office. Nicki Kenney and Steve Hornby, co-chairs of the Family Court Section Executive Committee, have been an invaluable source of support.

My role has involved me sitting on the Cafcass Negotiating Committee, the Section Executive Committee and the Family Court Committee. On occasion the three committees have joined forces and met



annual reports from each committee.

One very positive development this year has been the appointment of co-editors for the *Family Court Journal*. They have advised me that an editorial board is in place and it is now anticipated that there will be an edition of the Journal by the end of the year. Ideas for articles are always welcome. As I notified you in the last article, the Family Court Section held a very well received professional conference in June. I was also pleased to be invited to take part in the Women in Napo conference which was also

together. I have also been involved in Partnership and Strategic Partnership meetings with Cafcass management. Information about this year's work will be available to you within the

in June. This was another enjoyable and interesting event.

The last year has been a very difficult one for our Probation members with the privatisation of a large area of the work, the refusal of the powers that be to continue to deduct Napo subscriptions from National Probation Service salaries and the redundancy situation so soon for those working in the Sodexo CRC. These issues have caused the Officers and Officials group a massive amount of work and concern. I have done my very best to make sure that the Family Court Section does not 'get lost' within such a difficult political climate.

The SEC have nominated me to stand again as vice-chair and, feeling less nervous than last year, I am looking forward to another committee year for Napo. I am hoping to see lots of Family Court Section members at the Section AGM on 15 October and also at Napo AGM directly following that.

Jay Barlow
National Vice-Chair (Cafcass)

Profile – Joanne Perkins

This edition of Napo News profiles Joanne Perkins. Jo is the Co-Chair for Mercia Branch and joined Napo in 2006.

How long have you been active in Napo and what Branch post do you hold?

I joined Napo in 2006 and attended my first Branch meeting that year. My first AGM was in 2008 and after attending branch meetings on a regular basis I then took post as Vice Chair of West Mercia Branch in 2012. I took the role of Branch Chair in 2013 and I am now the Co-Chair of Mercia Branch. Although it was a bit of a baptism of fire going into the role of Chair as the split in

the service loomed, I quickly learned that although you make mistakes you do get more confident. The Branch stuck together and is now functioning well and recruiting new members. You learn where to get support from, other branches and Chivalry road. If you don't know, just ask.

Why do you think it's important to be an active woman in Napo?

75% of staff in Probation and members of Napo are women, so it's important the union is representative. With so many senior management being male, it's important that women are seen as being active and able to influence policy decisions.

Have there been any women activists that have helped or inspired you?

I'm not from a union background and had no experience of unions in the workplace before joining the Probation Service. My first experience of a Branch meeting was male dominated. However, seeing Tania Bassett take up the mantle of Branch Chair, holding management to account was an inspiration. When Tania moved on to become a National Official, I felt confident that I could step into the role with her support.

What do you think are the most important issues for women in Napo?

Juggling the needs of a demanding job and other commitments such as caring responsibilities is a big issue for members. Female TPO's in our area are finding this particularly difficult after qualifying. They are now part of a much bigger region and the NPS is expecting them to take up positions in workplaces in much larger geographical areas and a long way from home. There is a lack of women in senior management posts despite being in a largely female workforce and this highlights that are still barriers that women face that we need to identify and overcome.

What does Napo do to encourage women to become active in the union?

WIN and articles such as this help to highlight not only the need for women activists but that there are women activists around the country. Essentially though it needs to be at the grassroots. Women activists using their experience to inspire others. We've done that in Mercia Branch and now have more female

activists than men. Whilst it's important to keep a balance it's great to see so many women members coming forward and getting involved, be it in an executive post or being an office contact or rep.



women
+ in **napo**

Child sexual exploitation – prevention is part of the cure

In 2013 an independent investigation by Professor Alexis Jay into allegations of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham published its finding in the Jay Report. At the time of the investigation about 154 children had come forward to report current or historical abuse. The report highlighted shocking abuse suffered by children including being doused with petrol, forced to watch violent rapes and being held at gun point. It also found significant failings across numerous agencies to acknowledge the allegations as serious or to fully investigate them, denying victims both justice and support.

Following the scandal Sarah Champion, MP for Rotherham, has worked tirelessly to raise awareness of CSE. She is building a campaign for preventative measures in schools to equip young people with the skills they need to protect themselves. Speaking at the Women in Napo conference earlier this year Sarah highlighted some of her key concerns that had arisen from discussions she'd had with young people in school. She was stunned at the number of young girls that accepted abuse or violence in their relationships and the general normalising of such behaviour amongst both boys and girls. (Recent studies into young people's attitude to relationship violence has shown 30% of girls think it is acceptable for their partner to be violent or aggressive). The other worrying issue raised was the impact of social media on young people and a failure to teach young people how to keep safe online and the potential lifelong con-

sequences of online postings such as explicit photographs. These need to be urgently addressed, not just to keep young people safe but to educate young people to treat each other with respect, what a healthy relationship is and to have the confidence to resist pressure from peers and adults.

Napo has given its initial support to Sarah's campaign (although this is subject to a motion submitted to AGM by Campaigning Committee) as well as submitting a motion to TUC Congress this year. CSE is an issue that affects all our members, whether that be working with families and children at risk in the family courts or working with perpetrators subject to probation supervision. But it also affects members directly in their communities and families and as such we have a societal duty to help protect young people from becoming either victims or perpetrators of the future and not just focus on dealing with perpetrators after the crime has been committed. A large part of Sarah's campaign is looking at working with young people in schools and youth groups, increasing access to education and support. Barnardo's children's charity recently donated over £3million to Rotherham to help fund some of the work Sarah is promoting. Napo's TUC motion (full text can be found below) supports the objectives of the campaign and Napo hopes to get full support from congress.

Child Sexual Exploitation – Campaign to provide services

This Congress notes the alarming rise in

incidents of crime involving child sexual exploitation. Too many of our young people are becoming victims of this abhorrent crime and need support and education to help to keep them safe. Furthermore, victims need support to report these crimes and give evidence to aid prosecutions.

Congress notes the Government's commitment to help tackle this crime and make provision for victim services and support around giving evidence. Nevertheless, more needs to be done and the provision of services must be consistent and not dependent on postcode or access to funding.

This congress supports the magnificent work undertaken by Sarah Champion MP and endorses the call for the launch of a national campaign. The General Council are instructed to make representations to the Government to address the following:

- A national campaign to raise awareness of CSE to develop a culture where adults will recognise the signs and symptoms
- An education programme in schools around healthy relationships and the right to say no
- The development of a national task force with a multi-agency approach
- Specialist training for identified professionals within criminal justice agencies and victims services
- An adequately resourced victim focused approach to minimise incidents of crime and support for survivors and their families.

Tania Bassett
National Official

Support the SSAFA

Would YOU like use your skills and expertise to give something back to help our heroes?

Time is precious, it is the most valuable thing to give away, yet a couple of hours of your time a week/month could change the life of a veteran or current member of the Armed Forces community

SSAFA is proud to be the UK's oldest military charity and its support reaches around the world.

We have almost 7000 volunteers – military and non-military – who, last year alone, helped 57,000 people; be they serving personnel, reservists, veterans or their families through our myriad of support services. From casework, befriending, fundraising and welfare advice through to social care, housing, domestic abuse and bereavement support, adoption services and respite care; these are just a few of the amazing services that SSAFA provides. We have other

specialist services including Prison In-Reach and services for the Homeless.

At SSAFA, we recognise that it is often the little things which make the most difference but our teams need to be ready to tackle big problems too.

This is where you come in....no matter where you live, we know that your

skills and experience will make a difference to veterans and serving armed forces personnel and ensure they receive the help, support and guidance needed at a crucial time in their life. With a SSAFA Branch in every county, as well as volunteers in over 70 military establishments in the UK alone, someone nearby will know of SSAFA.

We are proud of all our volunteers and know that, as part of the Probation Service,

ssafa

**Lifelong support
for our Forces
and their families**

you will have had excellent training, expertise and life skills to contribute hugely to the SSAFA Family. Such is the demand for our help, a particular recruitment need is for case work volunteers to join the 4000 plus we have already.

If you are interested in giving a little of your time,

you can go to www.ssafa.org.uk/volunteer, you can even see all about us on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SSAFAForcesHelp>

If you'd like to talk to someone, please contact Tracey Morgan, Volunteer Support Manager on 07824 145296 or email tracey.m@ssafa.org.uk or visit our stand at the Napo Conference in October.

Help change lives with SSAFA