

Probation | Family Courts

# napo Magazine

## REUNIFICATION SPECIAL

New Probation  
New Napo



FROM REACHING YOUR HEALTH  
AND FITNESS GOALS TO RELAXING  
IN FRONT OF A BLOCKBUSTER,  
TAKE A LOOK AT THESE OFFERS FOR  
NAPO MEMBERS.

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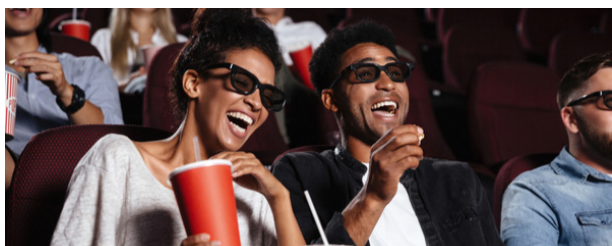
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# FEATURES

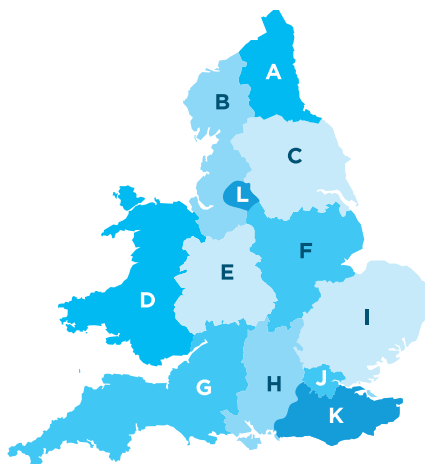
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extraordinary times



# IAN LAWRENCE WRITES ...



## Reunification leaves little time to look back

### A new era for Napo

In decades to come let us hope that the 26th June 2021 will be writ large in the annals of Probation Service history. It's a date that signifies the final victory over a disastrous privatisation policy perpetrated by a Government whose Ministers believed that they knew the price of everything but, in reality, appreciated the value of nothing.

The egregious politically driven attack on a gold standard public service against all conventional wisdom, was destined to cause our members much pain, the British taxpayers a fortune, and see the fragmentation of Probation into a parody of its former self.

But it's time to recognise that the brave campaign by Napo members is over; now recent history that we will celebrate one final time when we hopefully meet in Newcastle at our 2021 Annual General Meeting.

### A new build in progress

That is why this special edition of Napo Magazine will rightly focus on the long road ahead for Napo and our members as we take the rebuilding process that has been underway for nearly two years into its next phase.

Putting the new foundations in place will be no easy task; as we seek the necessary investment in people and training, and the money to pay Probation service staff the salaries that properly reflect their professionalism.

In the many engagements to come with senior leaders and politicians on these and many more issues you can be assured that we will never lose sight of our ultimate objective: a fully funded public Probation service, freed from the constraints of the Civil Service and restored to local control and accountability. As the next big campaign goes, it presents something of a test; sadly, it will not end in another



victory any time soon, or before a great deal of hard graft has been put in.

Given that Napo and our loyal members, have come through the right side of the biggest challenge that any of us could ever have imagined, you can be rightly proud of what your collective efforts have achieved.

It's now time to look forward and embrace the future.

**NAPO GENERAL SECRETARY,  
IAN LAWRENCE, LOOKS INTO  
THE FUTURE AT THE NEW NAPO  
HQ AT MORTLAKE ON THE  
THAMES IN LONDON**

# DON'T LOSE YOUR NAPO MEMBERSHIP!

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If you have been working for a CRC but have not yet arranged to pay your Napo subscription by direct debit you are in danger of losing the protection of your Napo membership.

As you know, your employment with your CRC ends this month. This means that your Napo membership payments will also cease if you are relying on their being paid by salary deduction.

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NAPO MEMBER – AND  
TO CONTINUE TO ENJOY  
THE PROTECTION THAT  
MEMBERSHIP AFFORDS –  
YOU MUST ARRANGE TO  
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You do not need to do anything further. All direct debits will be set up to run from 1 July, so you do NOT need to contact your payroll department and the transition to DD payments will be seamless, with your first payment coming out of your bank at the end of July.

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If you prefer to set up your DD over the phone with a member of Napo HQ staff to assist you then please email [membership@napo.org.uk](mailto:membership@napo.org.uk) and ask for a ring back. Give us a contact number and a good time to call you and we will do the rest.

But whichever way you choose to set up your direct debit, do it NOW before you forget. We want to be there for you if you need us. Help us to do this by making sure your membership isn't lost in transition.

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# JUNE 26 2021 - A MILESTONE FOR PROBATION

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**As we reach a huge milestone for probation – June 26th -the date we unify the system, welcome over 8000 colleagues, and together, create our new Probation Service Amy Rees and Sonia Flynn share their thoughts on the future of the reunified service.**

The new Probation Service will take the best from the old system, stabilise the probation landscape, ensure core services are properly delivered whilst also seizing the opportunity these changes present to innovate and improve the way we work to ensure we can better achieve our key aims. A huge amount of work has gone in to making the transition happen smoothly and on time involving many

people from across the NPS and CRCs. Once these structural changes are complete, our focus will then be upon our path to delivering excellent probation services, implementing our Target Operating Model and ensuring our highly skilled probation staff have the right tools, training and support to assess, protect and change people on probation.



**Amy Rees, Director General of Probation and Wales said:**

"I am really looking forward to June 26th and welcoming everyone to our new Probation Service. I am confident that through our reforms, we are creating a stronger, more stable probation system that will deliver excellent services to protect the public, reduce reoffending and support victims of crime. This last year has presented unprecedented challenges for us all and I am extremely grateful to all our probation staff for their continued hard work, commitment and professionalism which has enabled our core services to continue whilst we also progressed with reforms and our organisational recovery. I am so proud of our incredible staff across the NPS and CRCs and I know that together we are going to create a truly brilliant new Probation Service"



**Sonia Flynn, Chief Probation Officer added:**

"We are simplifying probation delivery, making it easier for those we work with and bringing together probation staff and resources to deliver effective reform. We have got over 8,000 passionate and dedicated people joining us and a key part of our new probation service is ensuring all our staff feel fully supported, while investing in their skills, capabilities and ways of working to enable them to do their jobs to the highest standard. I would echo Amy's thanks to everyone for all they have done during a very challenging period against the backdrop of the pandemic and I am really excited to see what we can achieve together as a new unified service"

# TARGET OPERATING MODEL:

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The probation reform programme published the first draft of the Target Operating Model (TOM) in February this year. The document, which runs to nearly 200 pages, outlines the what HMPPS hope to achieve through reforms and additional investment. It maps out what services will be in place come 21st June 2021 when the CRCs cease to exist and notes key milestones going forward.

Given the length and detail of the document Professional and Training Network will begin to look at each section and provide feedback to Napo and HMPPS. This work is vital if we are to consider the proposals from a front line perspective and highlight any unforeseen consequences of the model. Whilst Napo is aware that some "changes" are already being pushed through, this is being raised and challenged with the reform team as consultation is critical if this model is going to get staff to buy into it.

The document consists of 3 key chapters.

- 1. Chapter 1:** Introduction. This sets out the context of the reform programme, what is hoped to be achieved and how HMPPS proposals link to the wider criminal justice system.
- 2. Chapter 2:** Provides an overview of the changes that will be implemented on day one, the road map for achieving end state and clarity on what is planned to change what when.
- 3. Chapter 3:** Sets out the detail of the new model and is split into Delivery of Sentence Management, Delivery of Interventions, Victims Services and Supporting the Delivery Model.

If you would like to be involved in the consultation of the operating model, then you can sign up to join the Professional and Training Network. You can email [Shireena Suleman: ssuleman@napo.org.uk](mailto:ssuleman@napo.org.uk) for more details. The network will also be inviting members with specialisms in certain areas via our member's mail outs.





# COMMENT

FRANCES O'GRADY GENERAL SECRETARY, TUC

The reunification of our probation service is an important and welcome milestone. For seven years, Napo led the fight to return probation to the public sector, campaigning against the disastrous privatisation of the service. By highlighting the fragmentation at the heart of Transforming Rehabilitation, and exposing Chris Grayling's inefficient, wasteful and dangerous reforms, Napo underlined the overwhelming need for change.

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Of course, there is lots still to be done to repair the damage done by privatisation. Reunification must deliver a probation service fit for the complex demands of 2020s Britain: run on evidence not ideology; rooted in the needs of our communities, not bean counters; and well resourced, not cut to the bone. It's vital that investment in a reunified service delivers a fair deal for the dedicated probation workforce, with fair pay for all, vacancies filled and workloads managed. And we need robust collective bargaining machinery to deliver that fair deal.

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The TUC will continue to work with Napo to make sure we secure fairness for staff and deliver the probation service our country needs. And we'll be campaigning against the privatisation and fragmentation of other public services - taking inspiration from your successful campaign to reunify probation.

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REUNIFICATION SPECIAL 2021

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# NAPO'S DEMANDS FOR THE FUTURE OF PROBATION

In July 2019 Napo, following the first announcement about reunification (which still allowed for letting of contracts for the provision of unpaid work and programmes) Napo set out our demands for the future of Probation. Now that we have moved even further than this we re-visit those demands to see what has been achieved and what we have yet to work on.

## **Fully integrated service provision**

Reunification delivers on this demand; core functions needed to deliver and manage the sentence of the Court will

be now contained within one unified service. Let the folly of TR be a salutary lesson to guard against any future attempts to split the service and make profit from this vital area of work.

## **In the public sector and never for profit but out of the civil service and released from prison**

Removing the profit motive is a crucial step for Probation but the contracts for 'commissioned rehabilitation services' retain a risk that some of the organisations losing CRC contracts will see the new contracts as a way to recover losses.

**The new unified Probation service will be in the public sector but remains in the Civil Service and deep in the shadow of the Prison Service.**

The new unified Probation service will be in the public sector but remains in the Civil Service and deep in the shadow of the Prison Service. Being in the Civil Service brings its own challenges, as does the seeping across of the prison service 'command and control' operational style. In an organisation with a strict hierarchy this may well be warranted but Probation people should be



constantly questioning and be free to criticise the system in which they work.

Most crucially Probation people need to be able to take an approach to work with their clients that recognises and names the structural inequalities that they face – including racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism and all other forms of oppression that exist in all of our societal structures. Unless we can recognise the oppression that our clients face, and unless we can work with them to understand it's impact on their lives, we are doomed to perpetuate that structural oppression. Being Civil


frontline unable to question why they are being instructed to work in a certain way. Add to this the endless bureaucracy that frontline workers face for even the most simple of tasks and Probation work becomes more about 'feeding the machine' than working with people.

Being part of HMPPS is a little like having a very famous sibling. When people talk about your family your name is forgotten and everyone wants to know more about them than you. How many times do those working in Probation mutter "and Probation" when HMPPS is described as "HM Prison Service". How many times

**Unless we can recognise the oppression that our clients face, and unless we can work with them to understand it's impact on their lives, we are doomed to perpetuate that structural oppression.**

Servants limits freedom to criticise the state and the command-and-control hierarchical structure places all of the power in the centre with those on the

to we shout "and Probation" when the Minister tasked with overseeing Probation is described as "Minister for Prisons". How many times do we



despair when senior appointees to the department have to start from scratch to learn about Probation because they have come from a Prison background.

**It is crucial that all future plans are developed with evidence based practice at their heart.**

Probation is a key part of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and works in conjunction with other departments such as (and not limited to) Police, Courts, Prisons, Youth Justice, Secure services, the OPD pathway and the Parole Board. Our work with each element is no more or less important than others. The work that Probation staff do has a positive and beneficial impact on all of the other elements of the CJS but should never be seen as part of any one of them. Freedom from the prison service would not diminish the important link between the two services or the value that each brings to the other. Instead separation of the two services would enable Probation to have a voice and profile distinct from prisons ensuring that each organisation has the priority and focus needed.

### **Built on evidence based practice**

Sometimes developments are based on evidence of best practice, sometimes they are based on saving money, sometimes they are based on a whim. It will come as no surprise that the first of these options is preferred. In the first version of Napo's Demands we noted that staff were leaving due to pressure

to work in ways they felt were wrong or even dangerous. We highlighted that the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model builds in multiple changes of 'Offender Manager' contrary to everything we know about consistency of worker relationship being key to desistance. Similarly recent changes outlined in the new Target Operating Model (TOM) for the unified Probation Service appear to be contrary to what evidence suggests is best practice, especially in terms of work with people convicted of sexual offending.

It is yet to be seen if the new commissioned rehabilitation services will adopt models based on evidence and if they will integrate with the new Probation Service in a way that supports best practice throughout the system. It is crucial that all future plans are developed with evidence based practice at their heart.

### **Rooted in the local community and partnering with local specialist providers**

The move to a regional structure is a step closer to a local focus. Splitting some of the largest divisions down into smaller chunks is welcomed however many regions are still very large, with one (Wales) covering an entire nation. While contracts for Commissioned Rehabilitation Services (CRS, the new name for the dynamic framework providers) are split down into PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) level some organisations have contracts for several services across much larger geography. Letting contracts centrally does not meet our demand for partnership with local specialist



providers and so far there is little sign that Probation regions will be rooted in local communities.

We have a long way to go to rebuild the connection to community that is so important for Probation practice. This goes much further than the contracts for the CRS providers. The Probation Service must become a service which is visible to the communities we serve. We must break out of the centralised structure and make sure we are accountable to those communities. Probation

who are victims, whether they are in support functions or leadership and management functions. If you have no connection to the community you serve, how do you know what they need? How can you support someone to change their lives if you have no understanding of the context in which they live? This demand is possibly one of the most difficult to move forward on. Perhaps if we move out of the Civil Service and away from our colleagues in the prison service we will have more success at re-localising? For now there is much

**The Probation Service must become a service which is visible to the communities we serve. We must break out of the centralised structure and make sure we are accountable to those communities.**

practitioners work to support people to change their lives, and by doing so to protect the public and prevent further victims. All of the parts of the Probation system should be working towards this aim, whether they are working with people on probation or with people

more work to do to repair the Probation system, and more work for Napo to do as the voice of the profession.

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**KATIE LOMAS**  
**NATIONAL CHAIR**



# COMMENT

## CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PROBATION JUSTIN RUSSELL

"If there's one thing I'd like The Probation Service to achieve, over the coming years, it is to use the opportunity of reunification, and additional investment, to focus on quality and - above all - on the quality of the relationship between individual probation practitioners and the people they supervise. This is at every single stage of supervision, from sentencing - assessments and effective sentence plans that manage risk and encourage desistance from crime - to effective interventions that

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work with people on probation to deal with the problems they have and prevent them from offending again in the future. This is a focus for us as the Inspectorate and will continue to be in the future."

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# NAPO IS ADAPTING TO THE NEW LANDSCAPE

With big changes afoot in the probation landscape, Napo has had to respond with changes of our own to ensure we are still able to deliver quality services to members.



## WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Although Napo staff continue to work effectively from home while we organise and settle into our HQ at Boat Race House, we are looking at how we use our staffing resources in future. Napo is currently setting in place a proposed staffing restructure which

will place greater emphasis on branch support and democratic structure.

More details will follow once changes have been agreed.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you haven't already made the switch to paying your subs by Direct Debit, please do so as a matter of urgency. It will keep you in membership and give you peace of mind that you have the backing of the union during the transition.

You can also sign up to one of our many networks to help ensure your voice and the voices of members just like you are heard.

Current networks include:

- Campaigning
- Health and safety
- Professional and training
- Trade union organising
- Women in Napo
- Napo Black member Network
- Young members
- Manager network
- Retired members



Email [info@napo.org.uk](mailto:info@napo.org.uk) stating the network you would like more information on and we will get back you letting you know how you can be involved.

# THOUGHTS ON A REUNIFIED PROBATION SERVICE

**I have been re-reading the debates in the Commons from June 2020 when the government announced its climbdown and U-turn and its intention to end the private sector Community Rehabilitation Companies' contracts and move to a unified model under the National Probation Service.**

The rhetoric was predictable and at times entertaining but the difficult question of what a unified model looks like in practice was never addressed. It was interesting that a number of the contributors from both sides of the House made the point about probation being most effective when it works with other agencies, be they local authorities, Police and Crime Commissioners or third sector providers. I know from my own time as a magistrate chairing various committees in London for youth and

adult offenders that cross sector working is always desirable but not always achieved. The key to reducing reoffending is the same for all offenders, namely: a stable address, stable relationships and something to do with your time, be it education or a job. So a multi-pronged approach managed through probation is likely to lead to the best outcomes.

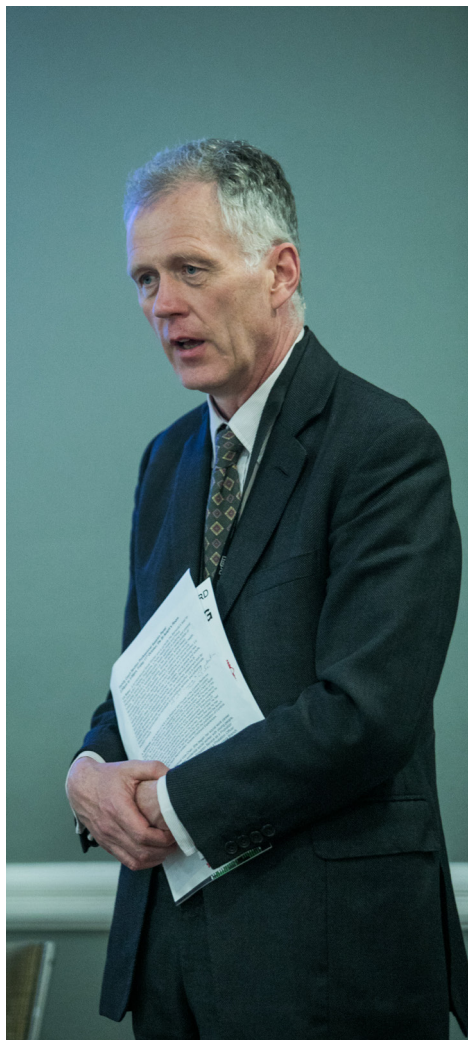
In February 2021, the government published its Target Operating Model for probation services in England and Wales. It's an aspirational document which sets out how to move from the current model, where the existing CRC contracts finish on 26th June, to a new model governed by overarching principles and optimizing cross sector working. There will be different solutions in different parts of England and Wales. It has been interesting surfing the internet in preparation for this short piece to see how many organisations have vigorously presented their case for active involvement in the probation ecosystem, be it through co-

commissioning, contracting or co-working arrangements. I'm glad to say that once you read past the political rhetoric and the management speak the central objectives of probation, as I understand them, are preserved, namely the delivery of overall sentence management through advice to court, community sentence management, pre-release management, and the management of prisoners out on licence. As anyone with even the most superficial understanding of the criminal justice systems knows, the probation service plays a central and coordinating role in the fight to reduce reoffending.

I have worked with many probation officers in my time as a magistrate in London and there is no doubt that many of them have a sense of vocation in their work and are constantly looking for innovative interventions which will affect the offenders with which they work in an attempt to reduce reoffending. However, this sense of vocation must not be relied upon or exploited. Some employees take reorganisations in their stride and others find it more difficult. I believe the coming reorganisation must ensure that the central objective of a probation officer's working life, namely to reduce reoffending, can be met.

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**LORD FRED PONSONBY**  
**CO-CHAIR OF THE JUSTICE UNIONS'**  
**PARLIAMENTARY GROUP**





# CHALLENGES – PROBATION REUNIFICATION WEBINARS

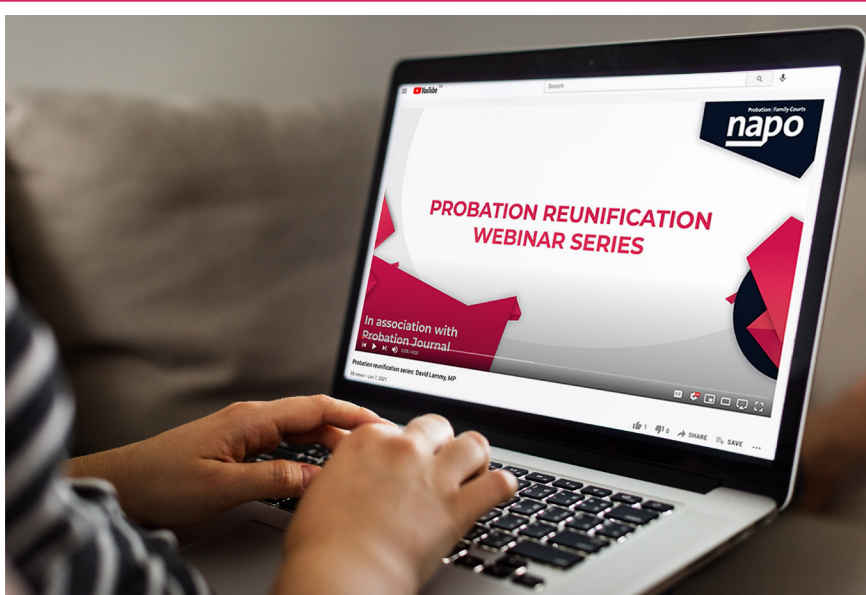
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**WHAT CHALLENGES  
THEY SEE AHEAD AND  
WHAT OPPORTUNITIES;  
AND TO TELL US WHAT  
ONE THING THEY  
WOULD LIKE TO SEE  
ACHIEVED FROM THE  
NEW UNIFIED SERVICE.**

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To mark the reunification of the Probation Service this month, Napo and the Probation Journal undertook a project to gather the views of a range of people and groups with an interest in Probation on the new landscape of the Service following the end of TR and the reunification under the NPS.

People approached included politicians, key players in the Justice Sector and academic. Contributors were asked to produce a short webinar clip addressing: what challenges they see ahead and what opportunities; and to tell us what one thing they would like to see achieved from the new unified service.



This collection of film shorts, providing a snapshot of where we are now and an insight into where we are heading, is available to view on <https://www.youtube.com/user/NapoNewsTV/playlists>.

Contributors include: Shadow Justice Secretary, David Lammy; Chief Inspector of Probation, Justin Russell; Andrew Neilson from the Howard League; Katy Swaine-Williams from the Women's Justice Centre; Jess Mullen from Clinks; and academics; Matthew Millings, Gwen Robinson, Harry Annison, Matt Cracknell, Sam Ainslie, Matt Tidmarsh, Jake Phillips and Kevin Albertson.

**Subscribe to NapoNewsTV on YouTube**

# REPRESENTING MEMBERS IN A UNIFIED SERVICE

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As Probation changes so must Napo. We have changed so much in the last 10 years, and we have learned much about the need for and process of change. What has never changed is the need for a trade union and professional association able to represent members in both industrial and professional matters. As we move into the next change we must ensure that members and reps are able to seek support, share their views and have their voices heard.

As the vast majority of our Probation members in England and Wales will be in HMPPS we propose to bring together groups of regions, and the branches within those regions, supported by a Link Officer and Link Official. This will enable the branch reps to meet regularly with their Link Officer and Official to seek support and raise issues for escalation where they cannot be dealt with in the region. The proposed regional groups are detailed here. We hope this will enable branches to work together to cover regional JCC and

other consultation meetings and to share best practice.

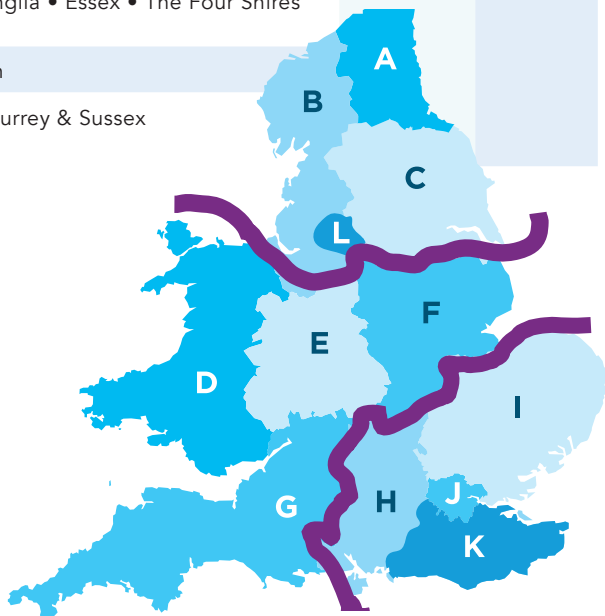
There will be three region groups: The North (covering North East, North West, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire & the Humber regions), Midlands, Wales and the South West (covering East Midlands, West Midlands and South West Regions and Wales) and London & South East (covering London, South Central, Kent Surrey & Sussex and East of England regions). Each group will have a link officer and link official to support them, to support communications and organising and to escalate issues via Napo national leads where necessary.

This will end the separation of support for branches by employer and ensure that our branches can build and grow ever stronger.

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**KATIE LOMAS**  
**NATIONAL CHAIR**

Region	Branches	Proposed Grouping	Branches in Group
<b>A</b> North East	Northumbria • Durham Tees Valley	The North	8
<b>B</b> North West	Cumbria and Lancashire • Merseyside • Cheshire & Greater Manchester (part – Cheshire only)		
<b>L</b> Greater Manchester	Cheshire & Gtr Manchester (part – Gtr Manchester only)		
<b>C</b> Yorkshire and Humberside	West Yorkshire • South Yorkshire • East Coast (part – N Yorks, Humberside and N Lincs only)		
<b>D</b> Wales	Napo Cymru	Midlands, South West and Wales	6
<b>E</b> West Midlands	Staffordshire West Midlands • The Mercia		
<b>F</b> East Midlands	East Midlands • East Coast (part – S Lincs only)		
<b>G</b> South West	South Southwestern		
<b>H</b> South Central	Hampshire Isle of Wight • Thames Valley	South East and London	7
<b>I</b> East of England	East Anglia • Essex • The Four Shires		
<b>J</b> London	London		
<b>K</b> Kent, Surrey & Sussex	Kent, Surrey & Sussex		



# PQIP: TRAINING IS NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE (AGM 2020)

Since AGM, Professional and Training network have split the motion into key strands to focus on. National Official Tania Bassett has met with the newly appointed lead for PQiP to discuss how Napo can engage at the very outset of any review of training and ensure that our members voices are heard with regards to their key concerns.





*"This AGM instructs campaigning network to work alongside professional and training network to:*

- highlight the issue with stakeholders, parliamentarians and the media*
- urge HMPPS to start the PQiP review as a matter of urgency and meaningfully engage with Napo from day one,*
- urge HMPPS to ensure that the training is developed to meet the needs of learners and not the MoJ budget,*
- insist on the inclusion of more professional based training rather than just processes,*
- insist that HMPPS review their recruitment strategy in light of the lack of diversity of learners entering PQiP which currently sees a majority of young white women."*

Since AGM, Professional and Training network has split the motion into key strands to focus on. I met with the newly appointed lead for PQiP to discuss how Napo can engage at the very outset of any review of training and ensure that our members' voices are heard with regards to their key concerns.

There are a number of updates in this area. The first is the Pathways pilot scheme for internal candidates. This has yet to undergo a full evaluation but Napo will be sighted with this piece of work once it is complete. However, early signs are positive and as such the pilot is being expanded to a few other areas. One of the main advantages

of Pathways is that it negates the need to use the much vilified City Rise Apps that has seen long standing members of staff fall at the first hurdle of the application process. This is under constant review with HMPPS as they agree that it has not advantaged internal applicants as much as had been predicted. We will continue to challenge the use of this app until Pathways (or a similar programme) can be rolled out across England and Wales.

There are also concerns about how the App affects diversity of recruitment and the recruitment process generally for attracting people from a wide range of backgrounds. Following the HMIP report into Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority staff and clients, this is an issue that is at the forefront of HMPPS and they are engaging with Napo to seek to improve diversity generally and identify potential barriers.

A review of PQiP is due to take place, although this is likely to be after the transition due to the volume of work the reform programme is generating. Napo's position is very clear, the focus should be on ensuring those that complete PQiP are appropriately trained for the job and not on seeing training as a means of saving money. Members will be update on any progress as well as consulted on any new proposals going forward.

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**TANIA BASSETT**  
**NATIONAL OFFICIAL**

# KEEPING EACH OTHER SAFE

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**NM asked Napo Health and Safety reps to share with us what has made them proud this year. Here we print two stories - we would like to thank ALL Napo's H&S reps for all the vital work they do keeping our members safe, especially in the present troubled times.**

A new Health and Safety Rep writes:  
"Around the time I was doing the

Napo training course for H&S reps I read that cleaning workers have been disproportionately affected by Covid, both deaths and infection rates. I also learnt that TUC advice is that cleaners should not enter any room that has been used to "Covid-clean" it for 15 minutes, which allows any particles to settle on surfaces, as against float in the air to be breathed in.

The deep cleaning regime in my office





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is pretty impressive, and reassuring: but we are a fractured organisation with outsourcing of so many functions. The 15 minute principle had been accepted at a NPS H&S meeting, but they of course are not the employer of our cleaners ... Our cleaner's management had not given her this advice. So I just shared the advice with her, and she has followed it since. So she is safer, I am happier, and we are all more confident

The moral of the story is don't be shy, get good advice and pass it on."

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**SU MCCONNELL**  
**NAPO CYMRU BRANCH**

The London H&S Convenor writes "The current pandemic has been very challenging for us all and the pressure has been really on for H&S Reps. In London, I am the Napo H&S Convenor and as one person it was impossible to cover all the necessary work in checking the generic risk assessments and advising individual members. So, along with my other Napo officers we set about recruiting volunteers to act as Covid 19 risk assessors and office reps.

These volunteers were fully trained by the national union and working

together with our Unison colleagues, we managed to negotiate extra facility time for all concerned with the risk assessments which have to be agreed and signed off every month. It has worked really well in the terms of making sure that the management-led assessments are to a high standard and meet legal requirements, protecting the staff. It has also promoted interest in the union and encouraged staff to maintain contact.

One of the consequences has resulted in us having a regular meeting via MS Teams for all court staff from both unions in addition to those who are currently not members. This meeting shares information regarding health & safety matters at the different courts across London and has resulted in us having an active role in promoting H&S in a number of sites and sharing ideas. We also have regular scheduled meetings with senior management to iron out potential health & safety issues and to make sure that the safety of staff is always at the top of the agenda. It is hoped that these initiatives will remain as regular events on the eventual return to whatever 'normal' turns out to be."

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**PETER HALSALL**  
**LONDON BRANCH**

# AN EXTRAORDINARY AGM FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

This year's AGM, 14th to 16th October, will be extra-special on a number of counts.

Firstly, we will be holding a physical conference again. After over a year of online events, members will be able to meet each other in person, albeit with possibly restricted numbers and social distancing safeguards.

Secondly, AGM will be in Northumbria for the first time. The venue is the Civic Centre in Newcastle and the Northumbria Branch are looking forward to giving Napo colleagues a truly warm welcome to this lovely city.

And, even more excitingly, we will be running this year's AGM as a hybrid event. Members who cannot or prefer not to attend in person, for whatever reason, will be able to attend online as we stream live from Newcastle. We are also using our experience of running a virtual event last year to enable those attending remotely to participate as fully as possible in AGM. You will be able

to raise points of order, ask questions, speak to motions and vote in real time using a downloadable app on your smart phone or other device.

Those of you who attended the virtual AGM last year and are thinking, "oh no not a more holding slides and piped music", may be in for a pleasant surprise. We hope that being able to watch a live event taking place will be much more engaging and we have learned a number of lessons from last year that should mean the virtual side of conference runs much more smoothly.

## **Programme**

Work is already underway to present a really exciting programme of speakers in celebration of being able to run a physical event once more. We already have commitments from Probation Minister, Alex Chalk; Victims' Commissioner, Dame Vera Baird; Howard League Chief Executive, Frances Crook, Shadow Probation Secretary, Lynn Browne and Liz Saville

Roberts MP, Co-Chair of the JUPG. More information will follow shortly.

Fringe meetings will however remain a casualty of Covid. We regret that it will not be possible to run lunchtime and evening fringes safely. But we are planning a number of online fringe events in the run up to AGM. These will be open to all members - not just those attending AGM. Again a full programme will be published soon.

For those attending in person, there will be evening entertainment on Friday. And, for everyone, there will be a Thursday evening 'Speakers Session' (7pm - 8pm) - streamed live from Newcastle. The theme will be The Police and the State.

### Registration

Online registration for those wishing to attend AGM remotely is already open

via <https://www.napo.org.uk/Napo%20Courses%20%26%20Events/agm-2021>

Because of the possibility of having to restrict numbers (we will not know how many people we can have in person at the venue until nearer the time) those wishing to attend in person are asked to register through their branch.

Registration fees this year will be £40 (Full, PAM and Associate members) and £20 (Retired, Retired PAM and Unemployed members). This will be the same for both remote and in person attendance. There will be an additional £5 charge for those attending in person and wishing to attend the evening entertainment on the Friday.

Members are asked to contact their branch for details of accommodation and assistance with travel and registration costs.



If you have any other questions about AGM please feel free to contact Kath Falcon [kfalcon@napo.org.uk](mailto:kfalcon@napo.org.uk)

# COMMENT

STEVE GILLAN, GENERAL SECRETARY

" The POA welcome the Reunification of Probation and we congratulate NAPO and Parliamentarians who supported NAPO on getting Government to bring about this u-turn where 80 per cent of the work currently carried out by Community Rehabilitation Communities (CRCs) will come back into the public sector National Probation Service.

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It goes without saying it should never have been contracted out in the first place and the Transforming Rehabilitation as set out by former Minister Chris Grayling was flawed from the start and eventually cost the tax payer a massive amount of money in bailing out the CRCs. Probation staff are true professionals and NAPO should be commended for their tenacity in their campaigns. Campaigns that were based on fact. Sometimes Government's believe that trade unions are part of the problem and never given credit for being part of the solution. The Criminal Justice System over the last decade has been cut to the bone in the name of austerity.

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For a professional probation service to flourish it needs investment so the professionals can carry their work out with confidence and protecting the public. This comes at a cost and I am pleased that NAPO have argued their case successful but there will still need to be work done to ensure there is no slide back on the crucial work of the Probation Service".

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# WORDSEARCH

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