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## Napo members give Grayling a birthday to remember

On 31 March and 1 April probation offices up and down the country were empty as thousands of Napo members went on strike. Around the country members marched, rallied and sang together in a fantastic display of solidarity and determination to defeat the disastrous Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.

Members were joined in co-ordinated action by solicitors, withdrawing their labour in protest at cuts to the legal aid budget. Messages of support also flooded in from across the Labour and trade union movement, with rallies in Newcastle, Nottingham, London and Cardiff being

addressed by leading opposition MPs and figures from the Labour Party, Plaid Cymru and the Green Party, as well as from other unions and the TUC.

In London hundreds of members from South East branches gathered outside Parliament to hear a broad range of speakers including several members of Labour's front bench and Sarah Lucas MP for the Green Party, as well as solicitors' leader Matt Foot, POA General Secretary Steve Gillan, the TUC's Paul Nowac and Napo General Secretary Ian Lawrence.

After the rally hundreds marched to Petty France and the MoJ headquarters, joined by the brilliant Grayling puppet and the legendary singer-songwriter-DJ-campaigning legend Tom Robinson. There Tom Robinson led a rendition of Happy Birthday (April Fool's Day version) for Chris Grayling before members left cards and a cake for the Secretary of State that left him in little doubt of what the professionals thought of his TR plans.



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# Napo members give Grayling a birthday to remember

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## Across the country

Meanwhile, In Newcastle Police and Crime Commissioner Vera Beard addressed a Napo rally at Grey's Monument and spoke about her opposition to the 'dangerous split' in the probation service and worries about the motivation and track record of private sector prime bidders seeking to profit from Grayling's sell-off. Concerns were raised about the leading North-East bidder, Sodexho, already running local prisons and seeming to be in a position to profit whether someone they supervised reoffended or not.

In Cardiff, hundreds of shoppers witnessed a mock funeral procession for justice as the probation coffin was carried through the City Centre. Napo President



Tom Rendon was amongst speakers condemning the split and proposed share sale. While in Nottingham Trent Branch members got the message of 'Stop making a pantomime out of Probation' across to receptive members of the public and the press.

## Raising the profile

Around the country hundreds of other members joined picket lines, leafleted streets and raised the profile of the issue. Media coverage was widespread and overwhelmingly positive, as well as leading to renewed interest from some quarters evidently persuaded this isn't the done deal NOMS was making out.

As Napo General Secretary Ian Lawrence said, 'Striking isn't easy, nor should it be, and it isn't something Napo do lightly. But sometimes you just have to stand up to bullies. Grayling and his cronies thought our members would just go away but we've sent them a very strong, loud and clear message – we are not going anywhere!' Ian

added that grayling's plans were already falling apart, bidders were either running scared or putting in bids NOMS can't afford and increasingly the risks arising from the split were becoming visible and obvious. 'If we keep up the pressure, keep the issue in the political and public eye, if we keep fighting and show we're not going away I believe we can and will win a historic victory – the share sale can be stopped because it isn't safe – we know it, the civil servants know it, bidders know it and Grayling knows it.'

Napo AGS Dean Rogers added, 'The turn-out around the country has been humbling but it shows the determination and depth of professional concern in Trusts. Members know the split won't work and can already see the problems the split gives rise to with professionals being pressured by bean counters into playing caseload tennis, trying to bat cases into someone else's court because they don't want the blame when things go wrong. There is no safe hiding



place for anyone – the NPS is running out of money because Grayling's sums don't add up and his plan is being implemented in a wasteful, chaotic and dangerous rush. Staff in CRCs see the bidders and their track records – either terrifying or non-existent with little in between. The strike has made the public and politicians aware so it's Grayling who has nowhere to hide.'



# Napo tells Parliament about impact of cuts on Family Courts

**The Family Courts Trade Unions' Parliamentary Group marked the anniversary of legal aid cuts taking effect by hosting a reception and seminar in Parliament. Alongside the seminar, the group published an excellent booklet highlighting the impact legal aid cuts have been having on children, families and those who work in courts. The group also published an innovative Beginners' Guide to Family Courts, written by Emma Permaine from solicitors Simpson Millar which it is hoped will help MPs navigate their way through the legal language and processes so that they can better respond to concerns from constituents.**



Elfy Llwyd.

disproportionately impacted by more limited or expensive access to the law, in particular stressing the unfair impact of limiting access to experts. She was broadly supported by Tim Loughton MP, a Conservative coalition Minister who said he was 'deeply concerned' by the impact cuts were clearly having and

how these had not been intentional. He described cuts that made the court process longer, more complicated and expensive as being 'self-defeating'.

In between the politicians the meeting heard powerful addresses from Emma Permaine and Emma Hopkins-Jones of solicitors Simpson Millar who used real life anonymised case studies of families who had been denied legal aid. They were further supported by Karen Watts from the PCS union, who talked from experience about the increasing frustrations and pressures heaped on Court staff from a rise in litigants in person and wider pressures relating to cuts in staffing and MOJ court funding.

Napo Assistant General Secretary Dean Rogers then set the legal aid cuts in the context of wider attacks on access to justice resulting from a Government being unwill-

ing to fund the sector. Pointing out that the meeting coincided with only the 5th strike in Napo's history and that probation officers were being joined by solicitors.

## Justice Select Committee

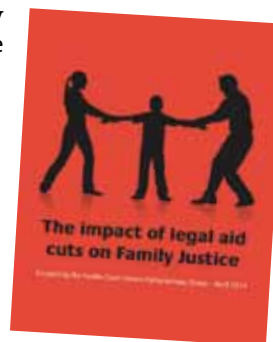
Elfy Llwyd MP announced that the Justice Select Committee had agreed to call back Ministers and examine the impact of the cuts as a priority. Napo, PCS and the Group will be looking to submit evidence to the process.

The audience, included 14 MPs from across the political spectrum, members for PCS and Napo from within Family Courts and the wider justice sector, representatives of charities and experts from different arms of the legal world.

Napo's next steps include:

- Following-up our research into the impact of the cuts and rise in litigants in person on professional delivery.
- Continuing to inform MPs and Peers about what we are seeing in workplaces.
- Work with MPs, Simpson Millar and representatives from charities to highlight the importance, and vulnerability, of Children's Contact Centres.

**If you are interested in receiving an electronic or paper copy of the Group's booklet or the Beginners' Guide to Family Courts contact [info@napo.org.uk](mailto:info@napo.org.uk).**



## Unfair impact

The meeting was also addressed by two former Justice Ministers, Baroness Scotland and Tim Loughton MP. Baroness Scotland was keen to highlight how women were

# Family Court Conference Saving Family Law

**Novotel, York Centre Fishergate,  
York YO10 4FD  
Thursday 15 May 2014  
10.00 am to 4.30 pm  
(Registration from 9.15 – 10.00 am)**

## Invited Speakers (TBC)

- Phil Taylor, Professor of Work and Employment Studies at Strathclyde University - Speaking on his report for the Scottish Trades Union Congress, 'Performance Management and the new workplace tyranny'.
- David Wilson, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Birmingham City University – Speaking on 'Family Annihilation'.

- Jabbar Sardar, Cafcass Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development – Speaking on staff engagement and development opportunities.

## Workshops

Workshops will provisionally include:

- Update on Children & Families Bill/Legal Aid Cuts
- Isolation of Service Managers
- Introduction to Pre-proceedings Work/Public Law
- Implacable Hostility
- Did you survive in Cafcass?

Register for workshops choices on the day of conference.

Open to all practitioners and managers working in Cafcass

## Napo members

There is no charge for Napo members attending the conference.

## Non-members

There is a registration charge of £60 for non-members. Anyone joining Napo at the conference will be reimbursed the registration charge.

**Queries to Jacqui Paryag 020 7223 4887 or email [jparyag@napo.org.uk](mailto:jparyag@napo.org.uk)**



## Ian Lawrence writes



### The TR competition process – a recipe for corruption

Among the many policies that our negotiators are trying to make sense of right now is one about preventing corruption amongst staff working in prisons under the new operating regime and of course there is a need for a sensible policy. But aside from the fact that the obsession within Noms about this possibility is about plus ten on the overkill scale, it seems pretty bizarre that the proposals to put staff under some quite intolerable invasions of privacy, are being aired at a time when Chris Grayling's ever desperate marketing team are phoning up companies who have indicated that they are no longer interested in the CRC gold rush, begging them to consider becoming secondary contractors.

Now it's difficult to quantify the full extent of this because all dealings between the Ministry and contractors are 'comm-

cial and in confidence' but that doesn't stop news slipping out from time to time.

As a result of this, we are trying to ascertain whether there are sufficient bidders left to even mount anything remotely resembling a competition in some prospective CRC areas, and it's highly likely that we will see companies who own the prisons in a particular CRC being the sole bidder for probation work. That's a nice number waiting to

happen and looks from where I am standing like very uncompetitive behaviour while we wait with baited breath to see whether Chris Grayling will step in to prevent such malfeasance.

### The industrial action and beyond

By the time that Napo News goes to print the National Executive Committee (NEC) will have reached a decision about the ongoing campaign strategy for the new ballot that we will need to conduct to keep our dispute with the Secretary of State 'live'.

This means that whatever question or questions you will be asked, we will need to hold a ballot in the two new arms of the service and that's why our membership section have been working hard to ensure that the database is up to date.

While Unison is not currently in dispute we are working with them to explore all future possibilities and to see what joint

activities we can conduct to maintain the profile of the anti-TR campaign. The objective is, as it always has been, to do all that we can to stop the share sale and ensure that all prospective bidders are aware of the fact that Napo will still be in national dispute, and still capable of taking further industrial action should members decide to do so.

There is still plenty to play for as the TR bandwagon goes into further freefall and the general election looms ever closer. The much vaunted under 12 months supervision regime which Grayling has made the bedrock of his grandiose and reckless social experiment shows no signs of getting off the ground any time soon, even supposing that any contracts are actually up and running before spring 2015.

The payment by results system has been exposed as a sham and the lies that are peddled by the MoJ about the HMP Peterborough and Doncaster reoffending pilots results have about as much substance as wet putty. Sadiq Khan and Labour are starting to see the light and we are actively exploring ways that would allow them to scupper any awarded CRC contracts without having to pay compensation.

We will soon have a clearer idea about our chances of challenging TR under Judicial Review on the new areas of interest that we have identified now that the evidence of what is happening is there for all to see rather than our predictions.

### The Euro Elections

No surprise to hear me say that I hope anyone who gives even the slightest damn about democracy, pluralism, tolerance and respect for all people and the rich heritage that they offer to our society will get out there on 22 May and help derail UKIP.

I know it's a message to the Napo converted, but it would be good if you said the same in your social circles, as we see more and more evidence of their sinister agenda and the desperate lengths they will go to as they try to foment division and hatred as a means to their pernicious ends.

Those who fail to heed the lessons of history etc...

uia & napo

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### Follow Napo

Find out what's happening and keep up with campaigns and events

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NapoHQ](http://www.facebook.com/NapoHQ)

Twitter: @Napo\_News

YouTube: NapoNewsTV

[www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk)

# TUC Black Workers Conference; an absorbing and inspiring event

**The annual TUC Black Workers Conference took place in London from 11-13 April and this was another absorbing, well attended event.**

With the combination of guest speakers, debated motions and fringe workshops, this year's event tackled the key issues affecting BME public sector workers.

The General Secretary of the TUC Frances O'Grady opened the event by reflecting on the challenges of the last twelve months. This was followed by the Chief Executive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Mark Hammond, who outlined in detail the commission's priorities on race equality, how these will be achieved and how unions can support these objectives.

Many motions on a range of diverse issues were discussed and voted on such as the appearance of Home Office racist advertisement vans and discrimination in recruitment and promotion, with these discussions providing some fascinating debate. Several fringe events supported the conference including representation from the GMB, PCS and Musicians Union and

workshops discussing issues such as the Immigration Bill, with former advisor to the London Mayor Lee Jasper also providing an input about deaths in custody.

The most poignant memory from this conference however was two emotive speeches from Carol Duggan, auntie of Mark Duggan, and Neville Lawrence, father of Stephen. Carol spoke of her battle to discover the truth about how and why her nephew died in August 2011, an event which triggered unprecedented national rioting and disorder. It was clear that the family did not accept the findings of the recent inquiry which absolved the Metropolitan Police of responsibility and failed to answer many crucial questions such as why an unarmed man had been shot. Carol vowed to continue the battle in her belief that 'the state apparatus denies justice to black communities' and to seek justice for what she believed to be a pre-planned execution.

Neville Lawrence spoke with dignity about the twenty years since his son's death but that the struggle for justice also continues for his family with only two men convicted of the murder. Whilst he has seen progress and changes in society he felt there

was still a long way to go and he reflected on the irony that it was Stephen's death, rather than the buildings he could have built as an aspiring architect, for which he had become famous.

**Urfan Amar**

*Thames Valley Branch and Lead Delegate*

## Napo Branch Reps' Course Programme 2014

### 'Representing Members'

2-4 June 2014

*T&G Centre, Eastbourne*

This course is designed specifically for Napo representatives who deal with grievances and disciplinary cases, this course covers: members' rights at work; what is a grievance; how to handle a disciplinary case; skills for representing individual members; new dispute resolution regulations, and the duties and responsibilities of management.

### 'Equality & Diversity'

22-24 September 2014

*Aston University Conference Centre*

This course looks at the duties of employers in relation to equality and diversity, and providing a workplace that is safe and treats workers with dignity. It is an opportunity for those representing members to discuss the different approaches to diversity in employment law and what that means in the workplace.

### 'Developing Skills'

10-12 November 2014

*Southampton City College*

This course is for reps who have already attended the Representing Members course and have had experience of representing individual members on grievance and disciplinary cases, as well as negotiating on collective bargaining issues. You will build on the skills and knowledge you have already gained, and look at the more detailed aspects of casework and its impact on Napo's negotiating agenda.

**Napo will continue to pay travel expenses. However, your Branch will be asked to contribute £150 per delegate towards the cost of your accommodation. Your registration form must be countersigned by your Branch to endorse your attendance and the contribution towards your accommodation. Completed registration forms should be returned to: Cynthia Griffith, Napo, 4 Chivalry Road, London SW11 1HT, or by fax: 020 7223 3503, or email.**



The Napo delegation l-r: Chin-Chin Oyolu-Barker, Ikki Bhogal, Urfan Amar, Ranjit Singh and Anselm Ubaka.

## The view from a first time delegate

**Having been nominated to go to the TUC Black Workers conference, I was unsure what it would actually cover. However, on arriving, I found the other delegates helpful and welcoming.**

National Official Ranjit Singh met with us early on Friday morning, the first day of the conference and outlined what would take place over the three days.

The most interesting aspect from my point of view was hearing Neville Lawrence speak, which I have to say will stay with me forever. He was talking about how the police investigated him and his family following the death of his son Stephen, and

that he could only conclude they were investigating him and his family as they thought he had paid someone to have his own son killed. Furthermore there was also good input from Carole Duggan, Mark Duggan's aunt. In addition to this, I attended a workshop about deaths in Police custody which again was very insightful.

Overall, I found the conference to be very empowering, and hopefully I will be able to attend next year. Thanks also to the rest of the Napo delegation who made me feel welcome.

**Anselm Ubaka**

*Durham Tees Valley branch*



## From the Chair

### Politicisation and Privatisation

We are nearly a month away from the intended formal split of probation into the NPS and CRCs. The reality of the split is already keenly felt by members due to letters of assignment, caseloads, tasks, office location, etc. However, it is important to keep stressing that the NPS and CRC does not yet – and will not – legally exist until 1 June 2014. This distinction may appear semantic to those at the sharp end but it is still of vital importance. On the issue of vacancies being advertised exclusively to those assigned one way or another this is a clear example of NOMS and the Trusts breaking the rules. We have referred several individual cases to lawyers.

By the time this article is printed we will have received a response from the Secretary of State for Justice about Judicial Review. The timing of this, prior to the legal split but with enough evidence to demonstrate what is going wrong, has felt very late in the day for some Napo members. However, it was important to attempt to negotiate through



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potential problems first. Having exhausted that process, we now have recourse to the courts. As I have said previously, trade union warnings do not make for a legal case – however frustrating that may be.

### Stopping the sell-off

Our campaign, in the main, is to stop the sell-off because of the risks to staff, the public and service users.

We have evidence that privatisation does not work with Serco in London Community Payback, or with G4S and Serco in tagging contracts or with Capita providing court interpreters. However, there is not so much talk about the NPS becoming a department of the Civil Service. Probation practitioners are not generally interfered with by politicians (I am differentiating between practitioners and organisations here). Convention has it that the justice system has an arms-length relationship with the executive. Imagine having a court hearing

in which the judge, solicitor and barrister are all civil servants, all representing the Secretary of State. Or imagine writing a parole report on a high profile case which the government and media are taking an interest in. Our professional independence is at risk by turning Probation into a civil service department.

### On the same side

Politicising Probation through the NPS is the government's easier task. Selling off the CRCs is harder in terms of the contractual issues but the risks for staff and service users will escalate hugely after share sale. That's why CRC members must be protected and high standards of service deeply ingrained in the new organisations. Not only is this the right thing to do, it will make profiteering much harder and the prospect of buying much less attractive. After my assignment to the NPS I didn't breathe a sigh of relief, I applied to change my substantive role to a manager in the CRC. Wherever members have been assigned, or chosen to work, and whatever our grade, we are on the same side and through this insanely difficult time we need to look after one another.

**Tom Rendon**  
**National Chair**

## AGM 2014 – Scarborough 9-11 October

**The theme of the 2014 AGM is 'Unity in Napo'. At a time when the government is tearing the Probation Service apart and staff are being divided to meet the TR split there is one place that we can all stand firm together and remain united; and this is at our annual conference. It is also a place where we can unite with our colleagues in the Family Court Section.**

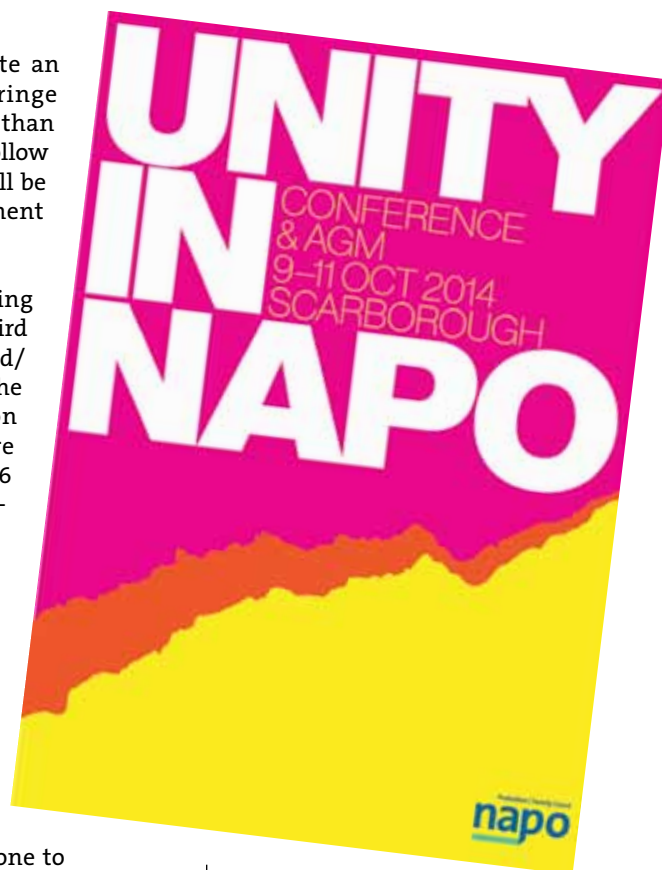
We want this year's AGM to be an expression of the unity – unity in opposition to Grayling's TR plans; unity in continuing our determined campaign to save our Probation Service; and unity in supporting each other through the current traumatic period.

Planning is well ahead for a varied and hopefully inspiring conference with a range of speakers. Minister Jeremy Wright and Labour Leader Ed Miliband have been invited, and Justice Minister, Simon Hughes, has been asked to speak at the Family Court Section professional session. A Question Time discussion panel is planned for the Probation session on the Friday morning. We will also be inviting parliamentary stalwarts John McDonnell and Elfyn Llwyd to report back on the parliamentary campaign.

This year we anticipate an even wider range of fringe meetings and exhibitors than usual – more details to follow – and, of course, there will be splendid live entertainment in the evenings.

Registration fees are being frozen at the 2012 early bird rate of £45 (£25 retired/unemployed members). The rate for late registration will be £60 so make sure you register by Friday 26 September to take advantage of the reduced rate.

Registration will open online on the new Napo website from 1 June. Registration forms will also be available to download from the website or you can request a form via email from [events@napo.org.uk](mailto:events@napo.org.uk) or by telephone to 020 7223 4887.



# Impressions from the Women's TUC

**As a Napo and TUC novice I anticipated the TUC women's conference with high expectations. After the event I can highly recommend it to other members. It was three very packed days, which I found immensely interesting and highly enjoyable.**

It was fantastic to meet with the other Napo delegates Yvonne Pattison and Angela Thompson. There is a wealth of perspective to be gained from meeting with colleagues from other parts of the country; between the three of us we spread from the far South West through the Midlands to North Yorkshire.

It was also great to meet with delegates from other unions and it was a privilege to speak to and propose the Napo motion, alerting the conference to the government's grim track record in, and lack of commitment to, Human Rights legislation.

It was ... in honesty ... a blast to hoof around a small patch of London with two great women, to dance the night away at the conference social and to sing the Napo

song (written on the back of an envelope 10 seconds in advance). Anoeskja Valent from Napo HQ did a great job; we had hotel booked, papers in advance and lots of support.

## Great learning experience

As a novice, it was all a great learning experience. Not least of which was to witness Yvonne's speech proposing the emergency motion in support of the new DV law (introduced as a 10 Minute Rule Bill by Elfyn Llwyd MP). It was a masterclass in how to make a passionate, informed and rousing speech.

I am Probation Officer with a keen interest in domestic violence and it was encouraging, but not surprising, to find the TUC Women's Conference debating many motions concerned with DV, and violence against women and girls. I learnt some new angles and perspectives, and it was great to feel a real sense of movement and commitment to addressing this.

## Lack of challenge

However, I was also struck by how consensual these debates were, and also that the received 'truth' is a feminist/Duluth model of male oppression. I count myself a feminist and I think the Duluth model has a lot going for it, but the women's conference, on



L-r: Angela Thompson, Yvonne Pattison and Sue McConnel.

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Sue McConnel.

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this issue, would have been a great place to participate in some challenging and diverse argument, rather than a rather self-serving (and dated) consensus.

There are many Probation voices and practitioners who could contribute to this. It is absolutely right and appropriate for a women's trade union conference to centre on the issue of violence and abuse of women and girls, but conference should look to push the boundaries on this, as well as really take on board and integrate an understanding that intimate partner abuse is not just confined to male-on-female abuse.

**Sue McConnel**  
**South Western Branch**

## Napo Equality Training Programme 2014

**15 May 2014 Race Equality**  
**5 June Public Speaking for Women**

All of the courses will be held at Aston Business School in Birmingham. Due to budget constraints we have made some changes to the way in which the courses will run this year. In order to keep costs to a minimum and to allow Napo to deliver a full equalities programme the courses will now run over one day (10am to 5pm) in the coming year.

We expect that most members will attend the course on the day. Napo centrally will meet the travel costs. If, in exceptional circumstances, members do require overnight accommodation, they will need to get permission from their branch and branches will be asked to contribute to the cost.

**For more information and to reserve your place on a course please email Deirdre Heinrich on [dheinrich@napo.org.uk](mailto:dheinrich@napo.org.uk)**

## Domestic Violence and Coercive Control Bill gathers support

**The campaign to criminalise coercive control in a domestic setting continues to gather support. A Bill drafted by Harry Fletcher and supported by Napo was introduced into the House of Commons by Elfyn Llwyd MP on 26 February this year. It had all party support. A Private Member's Bill can have up to 12 supporters and they included: Sir Edward Garnier, former solicitor general; Cheryl Gillan, former Secretary of State for Wales; Caroline Lucas from the Green Party; Margaret Ritchie from the SDL in Northern Ireland and Sandra Osborne, Labour and former Head of Scottish Women's Aid.**

In March an emergency motion supporting the measure tabled at the Women's TUC was passed unanimously. The motion was proposed by Yvonne Pattison of Napo and seconded by the POA. Other unions who

spoke in support included Unite, Unison and the FBU. The Bill is currently with the Parliamentary Clerks for technical drafting and will be ready for Second Reading in early June.

At the time of writing 91 MPs from all parties had signed early day motion 917 which supports the aims of the Bill. Meetings have been held at the Cabinet Office and with several organisations including the Magistrate's Association about the principles contained in the Bill.

The Bill has now been formally supported by the Parliamentary Justice Unions' Group whose members include Napo, the POA, PCS and the Police Federation. Napo and Harry Fletcher are currently aiming to get manifesto commitments from all the main parties.



## TR and its impact on workplace health and safety

**The key-note speaker at the Napo Health and Safety Committee training day in April was Kathryn Ball, NOMS head of Occupational Health and Safety talking about how safety will work within the new TR structures. 17 Napo representatives attended the course held at the PCS headquarters, Clapham Junction.**

There were questions for Kathryn on issues such as risk assessment of the RSR tool, facility time and shared use of buildings.

Other course activities included a refresher on safety committees (each CRC will have a safety committee and there will be a national safety committee for the NPS). This was followed by a discussion on the safety legislation that should apply to the impact TR is having on the safety and health of Napo members; such as the requirement under the 1999 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations to carry out stress risk assessments and the Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations in

relation to office moves to accommodate the NPS/CRC split. A couple of issues were evident from the discussion:

- The TR changes are causing significant stress for workers. We talked about how we could find out more about this – through sickness statistics or a Napo stress survey – in order to highlight the problem to the press/employers
- Relevant safety legislation has largely been ignored by Trusts in the recent office moves connected with the CRC/NPS divide.

We also discussed the need to recruit more safety reps to cover effectively the NPS/CRC divide.

If you are interested in becoming a safety representative please let your branch know, the reps on the course explained that this is a rewarding role, not deserving of the 'nerdy' reputation it is often labelled with!



If you would like a copy of Kathryn Ball's presentation, or any of the other training course documents (such as a complete list of safety legislation that should be applied to the TR changes) please contact Margaret Pearce at Chivalry Road on mpearce@napo.org.uk.

**Sarah Friday**

**Napo National Official (health and safety)**

## Women in Napo profile – Carole Brownsey-Joyce

**This month Napo News profiles Carole Brownsey-Joyce. Carole is currently Membership Secretary of Surrey and Sussex Branch**

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

I joined the Napo branch in Sussex as soon as I started in probation as a PSO. It was confusing at first and I didn't understand the minutia of all the union terms. Locally it seemed a bit of a boys' club back in 2003 but I took that as a challenge and soon got involved in the branch. Since then I've taken on many roles from TPO rep, H&S rep to Branch Chair and NEC co-rep. I am currently branch Membership Secretary.

**What does your branch do to encourage women members to become more active in Napo?**

As a branch we've worked hard to make sure that women have been approached and asked if they were interested in becoming active or taking specific positions. At the moment we have a good gender split and this seems to be well embedded. Since being involved in our branch I've tried



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hard make sure that women don't feel excluded in the same way I did back in the day.

**Why do you think it is important to be an active woman in Napo?**

It was really only recently when I was doing a short NVQ team leading course through work that I realised that huge opportunities Napo has given me. Napo's training has been first rate and given

me the chance to work with trade unionists nationally. Napo has supported my development as a trade unionist and as a person, through access to female specific courses like the Women's Leadership Course run by Ruskin College. Through Napo I've undertaken the TUC Stepping Up advanced rep course. I would never have thought I could be leading a team through the

traumatic process of merging branches. The people I've met through Napo have also helped me carry out my day to day work in HMP Ford.

I'd encourage anyone to get involved in Napo in an active way but particularly women. It will help you in your professional life in ways you probably can't even imagine now as well as developing your skills. You can be the leading light in your branch; but if you want you could be a NEC co-rep, sit on a national committee and maybe be a General Secretary in the future. The support and training is there for any member, female or male.

**The Women in Napo profile is a regular feature in Napo News. If you are a women activist in Napo and would like to share your experience and thoughts on what Napo is or could be doing to support women in the union please contact Megan Elliott or Sarah Friday via editorial@napo.org.uk for a questionnaire. Next issue we will be talking to Katie Lomas from West Yorkshire.**

**women**  
+ in **napo**



## SWAN conference: reclaiming social work values

**On 11 and 12 April, the Social Work Action Network (SWAN) held its 9th annual conference at Durham University. An invitation was extended to Napo to speak about the privatisation of Probation as many Social Workers see the same happening in their service too.**

The SWAN manifesto highlights the problems of managerialism, fragmentation of service, lack of resources, bureaucracy, workloads, domination of performance indicators and the private sector as current problems, 'The effect has been to increase the distance between managers and front line workers on the one hand, and between workers and service users on the other.'

### Engaging and refreshing

It all sounds so depressing and familiar but it's exactly why SWAN exists: to reclaim the values of social work and assert its role in promoting social justice and combatting poverty, oppression and discrimination. It was one of the most engaging, refreshing and spirited conferences I've been to.

The conference brought together international practitioners, academics, service users, political activists and students in a truly diverse environment. The focus and content of the conference reflected the skills and experiences of those attending and firmly rooted itself in the locality.

### Tradition of activism

Durham has a proud tradition of political activism and the conference opened with Heather Wood, PSO, Durham County Councillor and 'Save Easington Area Mines' talking about community solidarity, activism and care in the face of the malicious

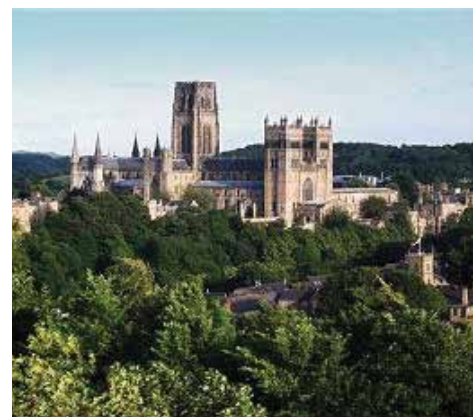
and barbaric Thatcher government. The challenges are as pressing now as they were then. The conference ended with a march to the beautiful Durham Miners' Institute and heard from speakers at a final rally.

I spoke about the issues facing Probation, the impact that the government's 'reforms' are having on the staff and service users and explained the ways that it can be challenged. One comment I constantly received was praise for Napo members taking strike action. For a small union, people were impressed that we had managed to make our voices heard and there was a lot of support from our sister profession. Invitations to join SWAN are extended to probation workers and there are details at the end of this article.

### Reconnecting with radicalism

The speakers were passionate and one of the strongest themes that emerged was to reconnect with the radical tradition of social work. What we all do in caring professions is a political endeavour as well as a professional choice and commitment. It was interesting to hear Russell Whiting of Sussex University talking about Clement Attlee's beginnings as a Social Worker (yes, that Clement Attlee). His brother and sister in law were Social Workers too. It clearly inspired the transformative politics of the 1945 government and creation of the modern welfare state.

Iain Macleod of Strathclyde University explored the possibilities of an evidence base in radical social work and the impact of language on our relationships with clients. Amongst all the presentations, the one that impacted on me the most was from Bob



Williams-Findlay, a disability campaigner and trainer at Wolverhampton University. He spoke about the government's misappropriation of self-determination in relation to disabled people. The discourse around choice and independence had been distorted from liberation and empowerment to atomisation in a free market. The right to exercise maximum choice had been reduced to personal care budgets- in effect attaching a market value on the lives of disabled people to make them attractive to the private sector.

In this short article it's impossible to do justice to all the contributors at the conference but, to sum up, the work of SWAN feels important, relevant and urgent. Many people there gave Napo messages of support and solidarity and wished us the courage to keep going in the fight against privatisation.

For more information on how to join SWAN <http://www.socialworkfuture.org/>

**Tom Rendon**  
**National Chair**



## Edridge Update

**The Trustees have continued to have a high level of applications for assistance during March, though this has reduced during April. A high proportion of applications are coming by email, which enables the Trustees to make decisions within a few days. Sending an application by post adds at least two days to the process. Anybody thinking about applying to Edridge, but not sure how to do it, can phone our Voicemail 020 3397 7025, and one of our staff will get back to you. There are instructions on the application form, so download it and read the guidance notes.**



The Trustees have approved a new version of the application form, which will be available on our website in the near future. The main change is that it has a Diversity Questionnaire at the end, which we ask applicants to complete, and this will be anonymous, and separated from the application form before it is sent to the Trustees. This information will enable the Trustees to monitor any potential discrimination. The

form is also intended to be easier to complete, but if applicants have any difficulties with the form they should let us know.

We have been asking members to make regular monthly donations for some time, but this is still not getting much response. Of course we are in difficult times, and we

are aware of some of the financial pressures colleagues are facing when transferring to the new bodies. We were therefore very pleased when we recently received a donation of £10,000 from the CSiS Charity Fund to assist our work. This will help the Edridge Fund face the pressures on its resources during the rest of this year. The donation follows a similar donation we received from the CSiS Charity Fund last year,

which we had received after some excellent work by Keith Stokeld, National Treasurer of Napo.

Finally, we are hoping that readers saw the piece on David Walsh in Napo News, who was going to do the Devizes to London International Canoe Marathon over the Easter weekend. We did set up a JustGiving web page to take donations, and there is

a link to it on our website, and also on Napo's website. David was doing the race as a protest against TR, and at the same time raising money for Edridge. So far the donations received on JustGiving have been disappointing, but there is still time to donate and express your appreciation for David's efforts. So please go there and at least donate the price of a coffee!

**The Trustees and Staff of the Edridge Fund of Napo**  
**[www.edridgefund.org](http://www.edridgefund.org)**



## Exploring the CSiS

**With the generous support of the Civil Service Insurance Society Charity Fund a grant of £10,000 has been made to the Napo Edridge Fund in 2014. Anne King commented 'In the current economic climate this donation has been gratefully received and will help the Edridge Fund to relieve hardship and distress amongst its members in the coming year'.**



Kevin Holliday.

When asked to describe the relationship between the insurance society, its policyholders, the CSiS Charity Fund and the organisations they support Kevin Holliday Chief Executive of the Civil Service Insurance Society (CSiS) said 'It's like a virtuous circle.'

Since its reconstitution in 2007, the CSiS Charity Fund has awarded £5.2 million in financial support to a wide range of charitable organisations who provide 'the relief of need, hardship and distress to former and retired civil and public servants and their dependants'. This has been possible thanks to a deed of covenant that was established when the CSiS was founded, all of the annual surplus that activity generates is given over to support charitable causes. Customers get a good service, and the more satisfied customers who take

a policy, the greater the surplus available to the trustees of the Charity Fund to support even more worthwhile causes – the epitome of the 'virtuous circle'.

'The bulk of our money goes to support the work of the main civil and public service charities and we adopt both a proactive and reactive approach to our grant giving,' explains Gill Noble, Chairman of the CSiS Charity Fund. 'We invite the main charities to submit proposals to us each year, especially for new initiatives that we can help them to get off the ground, but we also seek out other organisations where small amounts of money can often make a really big difference. We take each proposal on merit, but we are always looking for activities that can make a clear and direct improvement to the lives of individuals in need, for example, supporting someone through a family crisis, helping the very elderly, providing special equipment for a disabled person, and in some cases helping someone to get out of debt.'

The Trustees can be very flexible in

their grant giving and there's a degree of pragmatism applied in the decision making process. However, many of the projects selected for support are expected to demonstrate their ability to become self-sustaining in the future. 'The Charity Fund has pump-primed a number of new initiatives in the last few years and we have been pleased to see them develop into something that has made a positive difference to the beneficiaries of the organisations we've supported,' adds Kevin Holliday. The CSiS Charity Fund has helped around 50 organisations with grants over the past eight years and has made a positive contribution to the wellbeing and lives of many serving and retired civil and public sector workers in real hardship. And with the CSiS celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2015 that looks set to continue for many years to come.

The CSiS is very grateful to Napo for granting access to members with a Comprehensive Motorcycle Insurance product and details are set out in the advertisement on page 12.

**For more information on the CSiS Charity Fund visit [www.csischarityfund.org](http://www.csischarityfund.org) and for CSiS visit [www.csis.co.uk](http://www.csis.co.uk)**





## Letters

### Is Grayling devoid of conscience?

**First of all, thank you for campaigning to save the Probation Service, whilst not a member of Napo (Unison actually) I need somebody to know the impact TR is having on my personal health. I am currently under my GP for a stress related illness; not helped by the sudden increase in cases as allocated to me from NPS colleagues and CRC colleagues; a management who preside at my office location seemingly 'making-it up' as they go along.**

I have had 19 years of service wiped out by this government's drive to privatise the Probation Service, introducing profit (and stress) before public safety. I have never experienced anything like the current despondency amongst front line colleagues, gone is the camaraderie, the sense of job satisfaction as we await yet another ACE briefing when and where the goal posts are yet again 'moved' and not for the

benefit of staff who came into this job in a bid to make a difference.

Is Grayling devoid of conscience? Does he live in the real world? Does he even consider the impact his decision making is having on a once dedicated now depleted staff.

Grayling stated in his recent address via DVD to probation staff, that he was tired of probation bureaucracy, etc. I can confirm that in my office form filling' has INCREASED, giving myself and colleagues even less time to spend addressing offending behaviour with actual offenders,

**Name and address supplied**

### My thoughts on the strike rally in Cardiff

**I went to the rally in Cardiff on 1 April with five of my fellow strikers. The weather in Cardiff was beautiful. I caught up with friends and colleagues I haven't seen for years all of whom feel like me - weary, lacking decisive strong management, and undervalued - which was strangely comforting. I protested at what I believe to be an utterly wrong and contemptible process of dismemberment of the organisation which I cherish.**

When I first joined the service a trainer told me that the training and job would change me. Ten years ago I scoffed at that. When I looked around on 1 April I realised how wrong I had been. I had seen it as a job, a thing I could do and leave behind me. But this job has grown and become an extension of myself and like all great symbiotic relationships has given me wonderful moments, friends and a sense of belonging. Looking around me I felt stronger, I felt worthy and I felt I belonged.

I felt that sense running so strongly amongst the 100 or so people who were there at the rally. I saw it in the pictures of my colleagues in Gloucestershire and around the county on the picket lines. I see and feel it every day in the office.

What Grayling is trying to do is destroy this sense of belonging - believing that it can be sold. I do not believe that it can. That is why I went on strike. That is why I question the process that our managers and their managers are being asked to impose on us. That is why I feel comfortable in refusing to do TR related work without being directed. I am not picking on my manager and being difficult. I am adding a tiny little indigestible part to the national collective which

makes us less appetising to the predatory companies who are considering buying bits of us.

I think some of that sense of belonging has been eroded by the whole exhausting process we have been subjected to.

What we can do is feed and nurture the morale we have left and unite. It is difficult to walk out the door and see colleagues behind us struggling. It is difficult to see people in on their days off due to pressures of work. It is difficult to hear of our friends struggling in these times of 'austerity'. It will be more difficult when we look across the room and see an empty desk in 12 months' time.

Buyers/bidders are taking note; they do not want an unhappy workforce - vociferous in its disgruntlement and discontent. Their numbers are dwindling - we can increase ours! We have to stand up while we can. The fight is not over.

**Huw Wilford**

**Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Branch**



Staff at the Rotherham Probation Office in South Yorkshire staged a spontaneous protest last month during a visit by bidders to their office last month; walking out of the building as the bidders came in.

### Saddest thing about TR for me

**Last week I completed my mandatory day's training for life in the CRC, which confirmed many of the horrors we fear if this share sale is allowed to happen.**

However the saddest thing for me is that staff in the CRC will no longer be officers of the court. We cannot make recommendations at all, even in breaching our own cases. How deskilling and demotivating is this?

There are numerous processes, forms and procedures to be followed, so much more than currently required, and surely this will regrettably mean mistakes will happen. Court has always been our shop window, where our views are listened to and our professionalism respected, but no longer for the many of us that are threatened with privatisation.

We must keep fighting.

**Jackie Leggett**

**Wales Probation**

## Adverts

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### North Norfolk Cottage

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**www.hollycottagenorfolk.co.uk**

### Cartmel, Lake District

Wharton Cottage is a traditional yet contemporary cottage in picturesque medieval village. Sleeps 7 plus cot. Full details on website cottagelake.co.uk. From £450 a week and £300 long weekend.

**Email paulinefeeney@hotmail.co.uk**

### Florida Villa to rent

Gated community, 15 mins from Orlando's theme parks but in a quiet area. New open plan luxury one storey home accommodating 6 people (3 bedrooms, 2 sitting rooms). From £400 per week.

**Telephone Maureen on 01704 879956 or email sunnyfloridavilla@yahoo.co.uk**

### Personal Taxation Services

**As a Napo member, you are entitled to receive a FREE comprehensive review of your tax affairs going back up to 4 years to find out whether you are due a tax refund.**

Over 6,400 Napo members have already taken advantage of this opportunity, which is provided through Personal Taxation Services, the UK's leading tax refund experts. The average refund for Napo members is currently £234 each.

You may have incurred expenses or costs that could have been claimed as a deduction from your taxed income, missed out on one of the many tax allowances that have been available over the past 4 years, or The Revenue may simply have made an error in your tax coding. Either way, PTS will review your tax codes for the last 4

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years and assist you by securing any refund that may be due. This is the most cost-effective way to make sure you have not paid too much tax.

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in the pound, returning 61 pence in the pound to you. If there is no refund, there is no fee, and there is no minimum fee, so you really cannot lose. What's more, you keep ALL future savings (from a revised tax code) in full.

To see if you are due a tax refund apply online at [www.ptstax.co.uk/ref/napone-ws](http://www.ptstax.co.uk/ref/napone-ws) or to give us your details over the phone call the PTS Customer Service Team on 0161 968 7345 (Mon-Fri 9am - 5.30pm) and quote NAPO Newsletter

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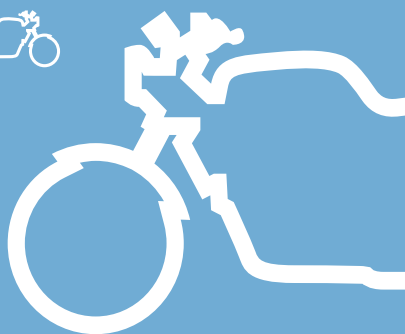
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