

# NEWS



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## Members' Voices – Lobby of Parliament, 3 September

**On 3 September Napo and the Justice Unions Parliamentary Group will be hosting a lobby of parliament to highlight concerns about what the government's Transforming Rehabilitation agenda is doing to the Probation Service.**

We had a resoundingly successful lobby last October which saw 300 plus members and parliamentarians in attendance. This year we hope to have even more!

The timing of the lobby is critical. It takes place straight after Parliament returns from the summer recess and just before they break up again for their party conference season. On Grayling's timetable, it will be just before he announces the preferred bidders at the end of September; and it is our chance to make a stand against share sale.

We need to push for political support at a time when the main parties are getting ready for the pre-election season and the announcement of their manifestos at conference. Nothing is more powerful with parliamentarians than hearing your personal testimonies and that is why we want this lobby to be about members' voices.

### Contact your MP

Firstly we need you to spend the summer

making contact with your MP. It doesn't matter which party they are (its each for themselves in pre-election build up); and in particular we are seeing a shift in the Lib Dems approach to the coalition. Use the parliamentary bulletins available on the website to help inform you of significant issues we have been raising. If you cannot go to see your MP in person then please download the model letter off the website and email it to them, or post it to the constituency office. You can find and email your MP direct from the campaigns page on the website. Either way it is important that YOU urge them to attend the rally and invite them meet with you afterwards if you are going to be able to be there.

### Mass turn out expected

Secondly we need you to attend. We cannot have a successful lobby without members being there. If you would like to speak at the lobby then please let Kath Falcon know. We only have time for a few formal speakers but we also want members to make a contribution from the floor. Time and time again MPs tell us that hearing your experience on the frontline is really powerful

**Continued on next page**



**Make Probation an election issue**  
Page 6



**Talks reveal two types of bidder for Probation**  
Page 9



**Register now for AGM 2014**  
Page 12

## Cabinet reshuffle brings in new Justice Minister

**Members will know by now that the July Cabinet Reshuffle resulted in Probation getting a new Justice Minister. Andrew Selous, MP for South West Bedfordshire has replaced Jeremy Wright, who has moved on to higher things as Attorney General.**

Napo General Secretary, Ian Lawrence, has already had a 'introductory teleconference' with the new Minister and as he reports in his blog ([www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk)) the proceedings were cordial. As would be expected, the new Minister was keen to emphasise

that he fully understood Napo's concerns and that his team were working as hard as possible to attain a steady operational state before it was judged safe to proceed with the proposed CRC share sale. Ian let him know that Napo was far from satisfied with the response to our letter to Michael Spurr (see article on page 5) and that we wanted to see the 'flesh on the bones' of Testgate 4 (the safe to proceed test) and have relevant input into the terms of reference. Hopefully Napo will have the opportunity to meet with him soon and we have also asked him

to honour his predecessor's agreement to speak and face questions at AGM on 9 October.

Meanwhile some good news is that the Justice Select Committee now includes as members a fairly sizable group of supportive MPs with John McDonnell and John Cryer being joined by Elfyn Llwyd, Jeremy Corbyn and Andy McDonald, all good friends of Napo. This should provide a helpful focus for criticism in Parliament of Grayling's TR agenda.

## Napo turns out for Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival

**Hampshire and IOW Branch were yet again flying the flag for Napo at the annual Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival this year. As usual a contingent from the branch was camping at Tolpuddle over the three days of the festival and the branch banner formed a rallying point for other Napo members on the big procession through the village on the Sunday 20 July.**

This year Napo also organised a coach from central London on the Sunday and General Secretary, Ian Lawrence, Napo Head Office staff and Greater London Branch members joined the branch for the day.

The Napo coach was kindly sponsored by the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) and we were also able to provide a service for the wider labour and trade union movement and to take colleagues and comrades from other unions and London based activist groups along with us, including members of a Filipino Workers Group based

in London, who were playing music and dancing in the procession, and two members of a UK-based project for migrant agricultural workers set up by la Confédération Paysanne. So it was a diverse group who made the trip from London. Everyone agreed it was well worth the early start and the slightly long journey to experience the great atmosphere of the event that is Tolpuddle.

The Napo delegation livened up the procession with our own anti-TR and anti-Grayling chants. Inspired by the brass band



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rendition of Tom Jones' *Delilah* we also came up with our own 'Why, Why, Why Chris Grayling' song. You can see this on YouTube, courtesy of London's David Raho – <http://youtu.be/ZvfJ7r486DA>

The Sunday procession was followed by a rally with speakers including TUC General Secretary, Frances O'Grady, and political columnist Owen Jones. There were also tributes to Tony Benn and Bob Crow.

The annual Tolpuddle event commemorates the six farm labourers who in 1834 were transported to the penal colonies of Australia for daring to form a trade union to defend their livelihoods. The sentence however provoked a massive outcry leading to the first great mass trade union protests. The campaign won free pardons for the Martyrs and they returned home. It was an historic episode in the struggle for trade union rights in Britain.

The festival also features a wide range of entertainment and a vibrant mix of trade union and political stalls. Napo plans to have a stall at the Festival next year and we will advertise this more widely nearer the time and look at ways of involving more Napo members in the event.

## Members' Voices – Lobby of Parliament, 3 September

*Continued from page 1*

and gets the message home that Grayling's plans are ill thought out, risky and have left the service in chaos. We cannot allow the MoJ to keep saying publicly that everything is alright when we know that is simply not true.

### Meeting arrangements

Napo will be gathering at Parliament Square outside the Palace of Westminster at 12.30pm. Due to expected high numbers we will need to be in the queue no later than 1.30pm to get through security in time for the start of the lobby at 2pm. We will then have Committee Rooms 11 & 14 until 3.30pm.

There is an opportunity for members to Green Card their MPs (i.e. put in a request to see them if you have not already booked an appointment) before and after the lobby but please factor this in to your time of arrival. Alternatively if you have invited you MP you can ask them to see at the end of the rally or during if their time is limited.

### Advance notice

We will need to give security the heads up on numbers so that we can get in as easily as possible. It is therefore imperative that branches let Kath Falcon [kfalcon@napo.org.uk](mailto:kfalcon@napo.org.uk) know how many are attending from each branch. Please do this by no later than 27 August.

**Tania Bassett**



# Unions submit 2014 pay claim for Cafcass staff

**Napo and Unison have now submitted the 2014/15 pay claim for staff working in Cafcass. Both Unions are claiming an above inflation pay rise for members to reflect the fact that Cafcass staff have had three years of only minimal pay rises which have not kept pace with the real cost of living.**

The claim in full is for:

- A fully consolidated increase of 3% or £500 whichever is greater on all pay points and allowances in pay bands 1-7
- The continued honouring of incremental progression to Target Point in each pay band
- An increase to the London Allowance

- Support for the introduction of a new Advanced Social Work grade

Napo says the claim is fair, realistic and justified and that meeting it will give the employer the opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to maintaining a workforce which is reasonably paid but is becoming less motivated as they continue to suffer a pay cut in real terms. Last year, the pay freeze was extended for the majority of staff through a non-consolidated award; unless this award is now consolidated people will suffer an actual reduction to their take home pay. For those who have also seen pension contributions increase this will have added impact. This issue needs to

be acknowledged and rectified by Cafcass.

The unions have also welcomed the proposed discussions around introducing a new Advanced Social Worker Grade, in line with previous claims. However, they have made it clear that this needs to be introduced carefully and on a sustainable basis. It is also important that the new grade assimilates into existing structures and carries the confidence of staff and unions are therefore calling for early and detailed discussions.

Meetings are scheduled to discuss the claim and Napo will keep Family Court Section members fully informed of progress.

## 'Stick Together with Napo'

**The 'Stick Together with Napo' Recruitment & Organising Campaign was launched at the National Branches meeting on the 16 July. The more members we recruit during this period and encourage to get involved, the clearer the message is to this government and any potential bidders for the CRCs that the battle for probation is far from over.**



The creation of the National Probation Service (NPS) and the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) has split the service in two. Psychologically, this split has had a devastating impact on the workforce, generating anger amongst Napo activists and members alike. Napo's vision is to keep members united in their branches, and with Napo. The most effective message that we can give Chris Grayling and the government is to get non-union members to join Napo, support our campaign, and get active.

'Stick Together with Napo' will run through July, August, and September, leading up to AGM and to the 18 October TUC Demo in London calling for an economic recovery that works for all of us, not just those right at the top.

### Taking it forward

The National Branches meeting agreed a five-point plan:

- 1) Request promotional materials through your Branch from Napo Head Office to support your local Stick Together with Napo

campaign;

- 2) Map your members – prioritise a 'mapping' exercise of the workforce;
- 3) Hold a Stick Together with Napo event in the workplace, or hold a social event with the aim of attracting new members;
- 4) Identify members who may be interested in taking on an active role in the union;
- 5) Build up interest and enthusiasm for members to join the TUC demo <http://www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/britain-needs-payrise-tuc-national-demonstration-18-october-2014>, in order to take our message to the streets.

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### How National Napo can help you with the plans

- To assist the recruitment of new members we have streamlined the membership application process. New members can now join Napo online by visiting the Napo website [www.napo.org.uk/join-napo-now](http://www.napo.org.uk/join-napo-now)
- If branches intend to hold workplace events or social events, Napo's

Officers and Officials are available to attend and lend a hand to recruit new members

- We can provide the 'Guide to Organising and Recruitment', which includes guidance on how to map your workplace
- Napo is offering local and regional training for new activists
- Napo will be able to provide branches with information on transport arrangements for the demo on the 18 October.

For general advice and support contact [Ranjit Singh rsingh@napo.org.uk](mailto:Ranjit.Singh@napo.org.uk)

Promotional material available includes posters, leaflets, coasters, post it notes, pens and lanyards – to order contact Margaret Pearce [mpearce@napo.org.uk](mailto:mpearce@napo.org.uk)

For information on New Ways to Train contact Cynthia Griffith [cgriffith@napo.org.uk](mailto:cgriffith@napo.org.uk)

**Margaret Pearce**



## Ian Lawrence writes



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**Next May will see a pivotal general election, but what must Labour do to convince the electorate that it has the right answers to the problems?**

As is always the case, public spending will feature prominently in the upcoming general election as one of the key areas for serious debate. While the Labour party has confirmed that it has no plans to move beyond the spending plans that have been set by this coalition should they form a government, it is at last starting to acknowledge that it needs to come clean on some of its mistakes when last in power.

The opinion polls suggest that the great smoke and mirrors campaign waged by the coalition since 2010, which has sought to lay the blame for the recession that we are supposedly emerging from as being solely down to Labour's profligacy with the public purse, seems to have lost its resonance. While it is clear that some sectors of the economy such as banking and finance are seeing an upturn, the story out there in the wider world of depressed wages, job insecurity, huge utility bills and for many, the local food bank, suggests that 'delivering the recovery' is now the latest con-trick being offered to the electorate.

### Blame game

Voters have come to expect each of the bigger political parties to invest considerable time and money trying to outdo each other in the blame game. Perhaps this is something to do with why just two thirds of those eligible to do so, vote. Whoever rises above this and says what they didn't do so well when they were in the driving seat may just have something going for them.

All of us will recognise that apathy is the perennial enemy of active participation, but if the main parties want to re-engage the dormant electoral rump that appears to have lost faith in any of them, then it's surely time that they offered some intelligible analysis about where we are in socio-

economic terms that people will understand. It's depressingly more likely that we will instead be treated to more of the usual pre-election mantra of personal vitriol and new promises that look remarkably like the last ones.

### Lessons of election history

Of course up until 2010, defending their previous track record was a problem to be avoided for just two political parties; but the bizarre outcome of the last election means that the Lib Dems now have some serious explaining to do, even before they embark on their self-survival mission. The austerity programme, of which they have been avid supporters, has been massively unpopular and has brought millions of protestors out on the streets. Yet this palpable anger has yet to manifest itself to the wider UK electorate in the sense that Labour cannot, despite the tangible failings of the coalition, approach next May's contest with huge confidence. As far as our members are concerned, my intuition is that many of you will want to see the back of the coalition, but that even if that were to be the case you have still to be convinced that a Labour majority would be able to do better. If current parliamentary and media gossip is an accurate reflection of the prevailing mood, then a small working majority for Labour or another coalition with a seriously depleted Lib Dem pack shoring them up is a real possibility. Yet it is worth remembering the infamous 1992 election when a combination of some disastrous taxation policy announcements by Labour and a euphoric pre-election rally allowed John Major back in against the odds.

### Daring to be different

That it would seem is pretty much the litmus test for Miliband; getting there on the basis of how his administration would be different. So what will be the big ticket issues next May? Immigration and Europe certainly, but notwithstanding the UKIP 'one trick pony' approach to these two vexing subjects, the voters who bother to vote when it comes to it, have traditionally roundly rejected the notion of handing parliamentary seats to right wing parties; but as I have said there can be no room for complacency. Labour has yet to engage with its natural supporters sufficiently on either subject, and I look forward to the September conference season and the TUC in particular, to hear what they have to say that is different to the populist agenda that we can expect from elsewhere.

If Europe is good for Britain then surely Labour must firmly say so whilst also putting its trust in the power of reason and

recognizing that many UK citizens want the 'in or out' issue resolved once and for all. Similarly on immigration, where the real issue is how to build a sustainable public infrastructure to cope with the fact that multiculturalism and a diverse (yet hugely transient) workforce are, whether the 'Fortress Britain' brigade are prepared to accept it or not, a fact of life. Miliband and his front bench team have a real opportunity to say that management mechanisms (many countries have them) failed under the previous Labour administration as they have under this coalition. At the same time they must clearly spell out the proven economic benefits that have come and will follow in increasing proportions.

On taxation, I have been telling key policy formers such as John Healy, John Cruddas and Chuka Ummuna that it will be no use Labour getting themselves into the usual five yearly joust about the rate in the pound while the real quarry is the estimated £120 billion tax gap. Overwhelmingly, ordinary people want to see fairness and transparency in the UK tax system.

### Privatisation

I have left out the NHS here, but only because its current travails are as much to do with the next big ticket issue namely, privatisation, as its other problems. I do not need to rehearse the misery that Napo members in probation are enduring as they see at first hand the realities of what being set up for privatisation means, and that's before any contracts are let. But Labour needs to firstly say that privatisation has failed Britain, and at the same time apologise for the fact that New Labour outsourced more public sector jobs than Margaret Thatcher when in office, with the same disastrous results that had preceded them. Needless to say they can do so on the back of continuing coalition failures which include Serco London CP, G4S and Serco again, TR, and numerous procurement contracts in the areas of military expenditure and IT, that have wasted billions of pounds of taxpayers' money.

Happily, it looks like Labour are grasping the nettle here as recent statements from Sadiq Khan on probation contracts ought to be a worry to would be probation bidders and their recent policy forum came out strongly in favour of an incoming administration declaring a review of all existing contracts. Napo has also been asked for its views on how future procurement processes ought to look, given our members experiences of successful partnership and commissioning arrangements in the former Trusts.

A tough landscape beckons, but so does a historic opportunity.



# NOMS denies workloads have increased since TR split

**The MoJ is clearly in denial about the impact of TR on staffing in both the NPS and the CRC; either that or they are having a laugh! Napo, together with Unison and the GMB, wrote to Michael Spurr, in early July, raising a number of concerns including:**

- Continuing risk of harm to staff and members of the public as a result of excessive workloads, inappropriate allocation of cases to staff and the flawed new Risk of Recidivism Tool (RSR Tool).
- The emotional breakdown and high sickness rates being suffered by staff who have been left in chaos by the rushed split of the probation service.
- Non allocation of cases due to staff shortages and IT failures.

We were astounded to receive a reply from the NOMS' Chief Executive stating: 'It is inaccurate to suggest that the transition has resulted in excessive workloads for probation staff, or indeed risks to public safety arising from the use of the RSR Tool or case allocation.'

## Astonishing

It is simply astonishing that NOMS can be so removed from reality. In a Parliamentary Bulletin sent out the previous week, Napo had brought many clear examples of excessive caseloads to parliamentarians' attention, including evidence that many staff are working at 50%-70% over their capacity.

We told the MPs about

- Both NPS and CRC staff carrying caseloads of 70+
- NPS staff being asked to do overtime covering in the CRC on top of their normal caseload.
- CRC staff being asked to write pre-sen-

tence reports for the NPS due to the backlog of reports waiting to go to Court for sentencing.

We warned that excessive workloads will lead to a serious public safety issue as has been the case in the past, for example the well cited Sonnex case in 2009.

Michael Spurr's response was equally dismissive of other concerns raised. He said, for example, on staff morale 'We recognise that staff morale is a very important issue... The programme has provided significant support to staff during the transition period'; and on case allocation 'We have done

extensive checking of the offender allocations and are confident that the vast majority of offenders have been assigned correctly'.

Napo responded with another Parliamentary Bulletin bringing the NOMS letter to MPs attention and explaining the real position using evidence provided by members through Campaign email.

Since the 1 June split, Napo has sent out 11 Parliamentary Bulletins. You can find them all on the Napo website at [www.napo.org.uk/parliamentary-bulletins](http://www.napo.org.uk/parliamentary-bulletins).

**Tania Bassett**

## Seizing the Moment

**Members in the Hampshire & IOW Branch of Napo seized the moment when hearing that Colin Allars, Director of NOMS would be visiting their office the next day. Placards were located, the Napo flag was flown and local trade unionists were contacted. We were joined by Andrew Pope, the Labour Party prospective parliamentary candidate (PPC) for New Forest East who spoke about the Labour Party's plans to throw away unsigned contracts if they come to power next May.**

A few renditions of the Tolpuddle 'Why, Why, Why Chris Grayling' song – were performed whilst we awaited Mr Allars arrival. Unfortunately, we were later advised that Mr Allars had been warned that a demonstration was taking place and his arrival was delayed; but he was confronted by a few remaining demonstrators who made a noise with cries of 'No To Privatisation'.

A Q&A session followed in the office

where staff challenged Colin Allars with some of the issues and concerns that are creating the chaos in our service. Suffice to say – I think he 'got the message'!

**Tina Williams**



# Make Probation an election issue

*Napo is running a campaign over the summer to target Prospective Parliamentary Candidates in the run up to the 2015 general election and brief them on the wrongs and dangers of Grayling's Transforming Rehabilitation plans. We are looking to making this a moral campaign issue in constituencies up and down the country and we will be asking for branches' and members' help in getting out and talking to PPCs in their constituencies. As a starting point we have produced a specific briefing for parliamentary candidates. An extract is printed below. You can take this with you when you go to see your PPC; and a full copy will also be available for download from the website [www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk) and from branches.*

## Probation is in serious crisis

The Government is pushing through complex reforms that privatise the supervision of over 70% of offenders whilst centralising provision for high risk offenders and Court services. This reform, known as 'Transforming Rehabilitation' (TR), is hugely complex involving abolishing 35 unified local Probation Trusts on 1 June 2014, re-allocating staff and cases into one of the two new distinct organisations and establishing new processes for assessing the risk of reoffending to facilitate potential profit for bidders. Having split the service in half NOMS intends to have long term contracts signed by the end of October – a timetable that puts politics before public interest.

But all is not lost. The evidence shows these plans are rushed, flawed and too dangerous to sell-off safely. By drawing the electorate's attention to the dangers and

risks for the public in this experiment, Napo believe we can force bidders, politicians and civil servants charged with signing the Minister's plans off to reassess the risk and step back.

We need you, as a Prospective MP and candidate to help by making this an election issue in your constituency.



## What is Probation?

The probation service works to rehabilitate offenders and protect the public through risk management, effective supervision and monitoring of offenders and working closely with other statutory agencies. Probation staff ensure sentences are enforced. Offences can range from lower risk shop theft to high risk of harm sex offenders. Many service users have complex needs and require individual sentence plans, one to one supervision and offending behaviour programmes. Probation also needs to work closely with other agencies, such as the police, social services, physical and mental health agencies, housing bodies and educational establishments. Trust and common purpose are critical to reducing the risk of re-offending.

Probation is one of the public sector's great recent success stories, with re-offending falling. 500 of the 600 responses to NOMS' consultation on TR in 2013 were negative about the impact it could have on service delivery and risk management.

Professor Paul Senior from Sheffield Hallam University said 'TR has transformed a high performing, well-managed service, with committed caring practitioners dedicated to public service into a fragmented system untried, untested and lacking in an evidence base which threatens public safety, destabilises an invaluable service and destroys staff morale.'

## Why Transforming Rehabilitation is not safe?

- Fragmenting the service reduces professionals' ability to communicate with each other and other key agencies.

**We need you, as a Prospective MP and candidate to help by making this an election issue in your constituency.**

- Splitting the service has created increased bureaucracy with additional tasks, duplication of work and less time for practitioners to work with service users.
- Massive case transfers because of the split, IT failures and staff shortages have led to high workloads. Staff are demoralised, stressed and unclear about new procedures.
- Systems haven't bedded in after the recent split. TR hasn't been trialled and the predictions from NOMS about reducing reoffending are not evidence based. This could go wrong for bidders and the public.
- The IT tool for measuring the likelihood of serious harm is flawed. Napo believe we could see hundreds of cases wrongly transferred by contractors to the NPS unnecessarily, swamping the NPS who should only be managing high risk cases.

NOMS predicted 70% of staff and cases would be in the companies. At transfer it was closer to a 50:50 split. If more cases end up with the NPS they may not have the resource to cope. The NPS will be working with some of the most dangerous offenders with fewer staff, lower budgets and will not be sustainable in the long term.

- TR does not offer value for money to the tax payer. The programme is uncoded and no figures have been provided about costs accrued so far. Napo believes that TR is already costing millions of pounds and the contracts themselves will be far more expensive than first thought.

## Who wants to buy Probation?

NOMS has a terrible track record of selling work to the private sector. With TR covering specialist and potentially controversial areas that are untried and untested markets bidding has been nervous. The structure and scale of the contracts has hindered charities from bidding and several potential staff mutuals have pulled out because the contract price wouldn't meet the standards they knew were required to reduce reoffending.

However, where there's potentially money to be made some big companies will come to bid. Several present considerable worry for Napo:

- Carillion – no track record in Justice but a facilities management and building company, in dispute with unions over allegedly blacklisting union health and safety Reps.
- Sentinel – new to the UK, Sentinel are a US company who've been challenged for







illegally extending sentences by charging offenders for electronic tagging then imprisoning them for non-payment.



- Sodexho - we believe they are mostly bidding in areas where they already run prisons, creating a dangerous conflict of interest, potentially being paid more if someone committed further crimes and was imprisoned.

#### How you can help save Probation

- Meet your local Napo branch to find out more about how the changes are impacting in your local community and the local risks to public safety.
- Meet with interested local stakeholders and service users to hear their concerns

TR does not offer value for money to the tax payer. The programme is uncoded and no figures have been provided about costs accrued so far.



about these reforms. Our local Napo Reps can help put you in contact with others from across the Justice Alliance.

- Challenge your local opponents for their views at hustings and public meetings.
- Raise awareness of the risks by writing to your local newspapers and including probation in campaign materials.
- Attend Napo's lobby of parliament on 3 September committee room 14 from 2pm and hear first hand Napo members' experience since 1 June.

**To find out how to contact your local branch of Napo please contact: [membership@napo.org.uk](mailto:membership@napo.org.uk)**

## Probation Training – a very slowly unfolding story

**The graduate entry cohort for September ought now to have been identified, since two months are required for CRB checks, etc. The process appears to have been rather rushed with a closing date in mid-June.**

Rumour has it that the original whizzo idea of advertising the places only on social media (Facebook and the like) backfired, with insufficient candidates putting themselves forward. This led to the closing date being extended. The final outcome is unknown, but the sifting and assessment process looks to have been somewhat hurried; so one can only hope that the quality of entrants has been properly judged. Will there be enough of them? Who knows? although our prediction is for a growing and acute skills shortage at PO grade.

Meanwhile, NOMS/NPS are putting together their training team at national and divisional level. This provides sub-

stance to the National Training Scheme (for the NPS). These individuals should all be in place by now, but the meeting of the Probation Qualifications Assurance Board (PQAB) which was due in July was cancelled at short notice. This is a meeting of various key stakeholders in training with its primary agenda being the development of the PQF. So the review process described in the last edition of *Napo News* slips again.

#### Timeline

A rough timeline would perhaps look like this:

- New qualifications structure needs to be in place and running from April 2016
- Lead in time required in order to let the contracts to the providers (HE Institutions) 12 months.
- Time left to review existing PQF structure and re-design currently 8 months, but with very little likelihood of anything hap-

pening at all before September, so call it 6 months.

Then in terms of continuing professional development, I REACH the NPS Skills Development Programme has now been published and should be available on EPIC. This programme will be delivered by national and divisional trainers within the NPS and will be accessible on a limited basis by CRC staff at least to the point of share sale. This is a comprehensive competence based programme which should already have been running since May. It is published for the year to April 2015.

Concerns remain that the review and redevelopment of PQF will be subject to ongoing delays and the risk is therefore of some discontinuity from 2016 onwards. Equally, a growing rift as between training for the NPS and in the CRCs seems inevitable.

**Mike McClelland**

## Paladin call for a 'Stalkers Register'

**Paladin, the National Stalking Advocacy Service, is calling for the introduction of a register which would enable police to proactively identify, track, monitor and manage stalkers.**

They put out the call on the day that stalker, Joseph Willis, was sentenced for the attempted murder of Helen Pearson, saying that the case highlights the escalating risk and danger in stalking cases and clearly shows that early identification, intervention and prevention is vital.

Currently there is no existing framework which can track or monitor serial stalkers and domestic violence perpetrators. Instead

police rely on a series of victims to report multiple crimes and oftentimes it is the victims who are forced to modify and change their behaviour, flee their homes and disappear themselves in order to stay safe.

Laura Richards, CEO of Paladin, said: 'This is about homicide prevention. Stalking is about fixation and obsession and some of the most serious cases end in rape and murder. We find that many stalkers stalk multiple victims and may escalate their behaviour. The introduction of a register for serial stalkers and domestic violence perpetrators is long overdue.'

Paladin works on all types of stalking

cases and they say that the introduction of a register for serial stalkers, similar to the Sex Offenders Register, would create a cultural shift in the way these offences are dealt with, by putting the focus on the stalkers' behaviour.

Paladin, which was established in 2013 with the support of and a financial contribution from Napo, is also campaigning for Domestic Violence Law Reform.

Laura Richards will be attending a Napo NEC later this year to make a presentation on the work undertaken by Paladin, and how Napo's contribution has assisted this.

[www.paladinservice.co.uk](http://www.paladinservice.co.uk)

## Women in Napo profiles Maureen Vernon

**Maureen Vernon is a member of Staffordshire West Midlands Branch, National Black Rep on the National Executive Committee and a member of the National AGM Steering Committee.**

### How long have you been active in Napo?

For the last 9 years I have been an active member of Napo holding posts within the branch and at a national level. My activism was stimulated by Davlin Bryson previous Chair of ABPO (the Association of Black Probation Officers) and through attendance at several GFTU education courses where I was introduced to other women activists from a variety of unions. I soon began to appreciate that regardless of background or experience it was possible to make a difference.

After acting as LDU Rep within my branch I was introduced to monitoring and from there to positions on Napo's national committees where I was able to focus on the agenda that promoted women especially from BME backgrounds. I have taken these challenges to the NEC as National Black Rep. It has been a frustrating as well as rewarding experience and provided a sound platform as one of the few black women ever to be part of the Steering Committee.

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

Union activism is like a duty as well as a vocation. As union activists we give something to society and the community we live in. Despite the hostility created by an establishment that fails to value the altruism bound within collectivism, women have through the years shown how unity can define the concept of strength and I am well aware of the heroines of the past who stood up to

be counted so we could vote. Women have played a role in trade union disputes throughout the movement's history and now we have a woman general secretary of the TUC. There is still work to be undertaken and with well over two thirds of Napo members consisting of women we must not sit back but rather take every opportunity to ensure we play an integral role. I was struck when attending the last TUC Congress that many of the senior union positions were occupied by men and there was an over representation of male speakers. My aim is to redress this balance in the future.

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

There have been a number of women who have inspired me over the years. One of these women who really demonstrated leadership and inspirational confidence was Judy McKnight. During her time as Napo's General Secretary she had a natural talent for grasping the challenges faced by staff within Probation. She was able to respond effectively to this and any given situation with an authority that epitomised her leadership. Her firm yet diplomatic approach defused many conflicts within Napo and provided a platform for our union's success. She saw something in me and I am grateful for the interest and support she gave me.

There have been numerous others, so it seems unfair



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to name particular activists; but Ushma Sharma from Staffordshire West Midlands Branch has helped me considerably locally. Also I would not have been able to make anywhere near the contribution I have as a member of Steering Committee without the wisdom and knowledge of Jeanne Peel. Others include Eve Chester and Caroline Bewley who were very supportive of me during their time as National Vice Chairs. I

also benefited directly from Cordell Pillay's efforts to keep equality and diversity on the agenda during her time with Napo.

We need to continue to be vigilant to ensure those who would seek to write out of history women heroines of the past don't succeed; for example Michael Gove's efforts to prevent children been taught about Mary Seacole's part as the black nurse who pioneered the care of the wounded in the Crimean War in favour of teaching about Cromwell and Churchill.

### What does your branch do to encourage women members to become active?

Within the limitations of facility time the branch encourages women to take posts on the Branch Executive. Through work in representing women especially those over 50 from BME backgrounds, Ushma Sharma has fostered a positive environment for women to become active.

**If you are interested in taking part in the Women in Napo profiles contact Megan Elliott [melliott@napo.org.uk](mailto:melliott@napo.org.uk) or Sarah Friday [sfriday@napo.org.uk](mailto:sfriday@napo.org.uk)**

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



# Talks reveal two types of bidder for Probation

**Napo Assistant General Secretary, Dean Rogers takes a closer look at the motives of different TR bidders and highlights how these reflect the central problem with Grayling's vision.**

Napo has started talking to potential bidders, primarily to ensure they are as aware as possible of the obligations and commitments entailed and to show them from the start that Napo is a force to be recognised across probation. We're also using the talks as an opportunity to assess in more detail the sort of people we'll be dealing with if their bids win. Our efforts to engage are proving to be enlightening.

The bidders broadly fall into the two camps I've previously described: the leading cowboys, ruthless gunslingers used to doing what it takes to win in the wild-west, who've recently donned the local Sheriff's badge to garner some kind of respectability; alongside the smaller but growing not-for-profit charitable sector, the equivalent of the lay wild-west preachers, eager to see good work done and aware of an opportunity when they see it, but who publically fear the cowboys cleaning up as much as we do.

## The 'good guys'

Not surprisingly, to date the latter group is more inclined to answer our calls and to talk. We're finding many have roots in



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probation and know more about the service than some may expect. Most are already actively engaged in work with probation and our partners – many having grown out of community funded support for offenders in areas like drug and alcohol recovery, housing or training support. Had Grayling chosen a different model for expanding provision to the under-12-months cadre many Trusts could fea-

sibly have commissioned work from these same bidders, as some were already doing – often with local Napo support.

These bidders appear to be ambitious, realistic and nervous. Their background knowledge means they recognise what isn't working now and the size of the risks in terms of delivery. They start from meeting the needs of the client and see the main risk in the contracts as reoffending not coming down. They are incredibly vulnerable to reputational risk, both as a provider and an employer. As not for profit organisations they could under-bid profiteers but don't have the financial reserves or legal capacity to run at a loss so can do so only if the contracts clearly specify adequate standards and benchmarks for all parties to be held to.

They're consistently telling us that the current contracts don't look like they can work and unless two things change dramatically they'll not sign off, regardless of NOMS' pressure. These two things are:

viable funding and appropriate support from NOMS to changing requirements and expectations; and much clearer information about current risks and liabilities. They confirm NOMS can't even, at present, tell them how many staff at what grades they'd be taking on potentially in October. Nor can NOMS say what the initial expectations around 'through the gate' are.

## The profiteers

Then there are the profiteers who are currently much more reluctant to engage with us. This is hardly surprising. Their principal motive is profit. They worry more about their reputation with the City and shareholders than the public and even less so the interest of the client. We fear Grayling instinctively likes these people more than the 'bleeding heart liberals'; who if trapped in a lift with him would probably start whining about food banks. These corporates share a starting point with Grayling; probation is about administering punishments, believing the public are more interested in how much this costs them.

## Capital gains

You can't really blame the likes of Sodexo for trying to capitalise on these dodgy contracts and the opportunity for their shareholders to profit. It's what they do. They see no moral conflict in making money out of punishing offenders, even less so in capitalising on the links between their Director of Strategy and Public Sector Developments and the Tory Party – Kate Steadman having gone to work for Sodexo straight from her previous role, advising Cameron and co on Prisons, Probation, Criminal Justice and Legal Affairs prior to the last election. Sodexo and co aren't pretending this is anything it isn't; Grayling's doing the lying in pretending this is about promoting innovation and reducing reoffending.

In this card game, Grayling and the profiteers are gambling that public interest won't extend to questioning the legitimacy of any winning bidder already having prison or tagging contracts and so offering to run probation at a loss and cross-subsidise their wider interests. When Napo and others do challenge such blatant conflict of interest, as some PCCs have, their aim is to feed off the public's wider cynicism about political corruption and not really caring about rehabilitation either.

Napo's summer campaign of targeting Prospective Parliamentary Candidates in the run up to the 2015 general election and making this a moral campaign issue in constituencies up and down the country is aimed at tackling this cynicism head on. It's not yet time to fold our hand.

## Justice and Family Court groups report

**Napo is a member of two important parliamentary groups; the Justice Unions' Group (founded in 2004) and the Family Court Unions' Group, established in 2006). Both groups comprise MPs and Peers on a cross-party basis and have been exceedingly important in furthering Napo's influence and campaigning activity in Parliament.**

The JUPG has over 50 parliamentarian members and meets regularly with Napo, POA and PCS to discuss issues of concern within the CJS. It is currently chaired by Elfyn Llwyd MP (Plaid Cymru); with Jenny Chapman (Labour), Tom Brake (Lib Dem), Lord Ramsbotham (CB) and Baroness Gibson (Labour) as Vice-Chairs; and John McDonnell (Labour as Secretary).

The FCUPG comprises over 20 MPs and Peers, again on a cross-party basis, and is sponsored by Napo, PCS and Simpson Millar Solicitors. It also is currently chaired by

Elfyn Llwyd and it meets every two months whilst parliament is sitting to discuss issues such as Legal Aid cuts, Child Contact Centres, litigants in person and Cafcass.

The groups have recently published a Parliamentary Digest as a summary of their work for the past six months. The report lists parliamentary questions asked by members of the groups on behalf of the unions, provides information on Early Day Motions tabled and reports on debates obtained and participated in. There are also copies of correspondence with government officials and departments on issues of concern to the groups and a summary of other activities over the period.

**A full copy of the report can be downloaded from the Napo website [www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk) or if you want a paper copy posted or an electronic copy emailed to you, contact Kath Falcon [kfalcon@napo.org.uk](mailto:kfalcon@napo.org.uk)**

# Professional judgement or safety first?

**At the Probation Institute Summer Conference held in London one of the workshops was used to present the findings of a study on how professional judgement was used in deference to National Standards of the past. It examined why some staff embraced the change while others hated the concept. The study considered how using professional judgement impacted on practice as well as looking at what it meant for line management.**



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The study was London-centric and although time constraints probably prevented any comparison with other areas it seemed to leave the question as to how representative the findings were in respect of the rest of the Country.

Much of focus was on what happened after Probation staff were 'free to apply professional judgement' while seemingly ignoring the rationale of why National Standards were introduced. Interestingly there was no reference to any measure likely to be adopted post the split. Also little time was devoted to the role of targets and National Standards in meeting the mantra of successive ministers whose apparent mission was to make community sentences tougher.

One assumes the challenge is whether those applying professional judgement can deliver community sentences that command the confidence of all interested parties? Would it satisfy the Courts, victims and the politicians who never tire of chang-

ing the direction of the Probation Service, including the train crash set in motion by Grayling's agenda? It was not clear if the implementation of 'professional judgement' could pull it off. Instead the focus shifted to what could be achieved when practitioners were freed from prescribed limits.

Leaving 'professionals' to make their judgements meant achieving a balance between the needy as opposed to managing high risk cases; and although the wider discussion picked up on how professional and personal interest may influence where staff chose to spend there time, it was not fully explored.

## Concerns and possible downsides

Anxiety about freeing professionals was not only confined to supervisors; but also affected managers seeking to ensure 'standards of contact' were maintained within the study area. It seems that those with 'longer' records of service (for this study this was defined as over seven years) struggled to let go of the 'comfort' to be derived from National Standards. Staff of less vintage were apparently more comfortable with the innovation. Those of even longer standing may well have their own views looking back to when professional judgement was more a way of life than a byword.

Missing was the potential impact of the concept of professional judgement on increasing workloads (this was one of the fears exposed within the Suffolk and Sussex pilot and seemingly forgotten) which together with the often draconian system

for dealing with Serious Further Offences indicates that there may well be a price to pay for exercising professional judgement. Until investigations take a more 'what can be done to ensure staff are supported' rather than 'who is to blame' approach there will remain constraints on professional judgement.

No matter how effective anyone's practice has been or whatever citations are awarded in respect of professionalism, one SFO equals total wipe out. How many officers have had real anxiety when news breaks of a serious offence in the community and their first thought is 'I hope it's not one of my cases'.

One of the findings of the study was the failure of officers to provide written evidence about decisions made or judgements on risk. Plans lacked detail or assessments were confusing. Recording was inadequate and became lost in a tangle of inadequate IT case recording systems. Cases transferred as a result of the split have only served to highlight that knowledge carried in the head is not transferrable.

## Further challenges

'Professional judgement' faces further challenges when the inequality of resources is exposed within the split. Managing in both arenas has highlighted how practitioners are faced with an input choice, IT or the client. Anecdotal evidence suggests IT challenges along with a failure to provide an adequate workload measurement tool will lead to a deterioration of professional standards, not judgement.

Those who choose to work for Probation do so for a myriad of reasons; however, for the majority it is the chance of a career that fulfils their values and ethics. These concepts seem almost sullied by the pressures of the current climate and readily sacrificed to Grayling's desire to use the market as his inspiration for 'innovation'.

For those of a certain age and career history 'professional judgement' wasn't a choice, it was enshrined in the concept of assisting people to achieve change within a Probationary period, it was exploring the concept of being an agent for change within a service as a change agent. Therefore the question remains, does the use of professional judgement increase the quality of the supervision? Does it deliver on managing risk and what is its impact on the relationship between the worker and those being supervised? Does it have a place within Grayling's brave new world?

For staff struggling to survive it may well be – safety first.

**Keith Stokeld**  
**National Treasurer**

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NAPOL/2014



## Edridge Update

### New Trustee appointed

We are pleased to announce that the NEC elected a new Trustee for Edridge at their meeting in July. The new Trustee is Bev Palmer, who is a member of Western Branch, based in Torquay, and she will start her term of office in September. Bev has been the Edridge Representative in her area for some time, and has been very active in promoting Edridge in her Branch. The Trustees are looking forward to having her on the team.

Bev Palmer replaces Liz Bywater (Kent Branch), who has been a valued member of the Trustee team, making large efforts in fund raising, and has also useful contributions towards Edridge maintaining and improving our procedures in terms of equal opportunities. We will miss Liz, but she has now retired from the Service and has started some very valuable charitable work in her own area. Liz was also the Edridge Representative in Kent until a few months ago.

One thing that did encourage us was the fact that there were three candidates for the Trustee vacancy.

### Edridge Branch Representatives

Following the TR changes we are still struggling to find out who our Representatives

are in the new Branches. We have written to all the new Branch Chairs, but the response so far has been disappointing to say the least. Edridge Branch Representatives are an important part of Edridge, and a valuable way for Napo to assist members.

So if you have been appointed as an Edridge Representative please let us know by email to [office@edridgefund.org](mailto:office@edridgefund.org) as soon as you can. We know that members are under enormous pressure dealing with the changes, but we really do need to have our network of Representatives in place to assist us in helping our colleagues in need.

### Edridge website – changes in ‘How to Donate to Edridge’

We have just made some changes to our website to give members clearer informa-

tion on the various ways of donating to Edridge. Up till now the links on every page took you to the JustGiving.com website, but the links now take you to a Donations page, where all the ways of donating are explained clearly.

### Applications for assistance

Applications for help have continued at a high level, and our projection is that we are likely to have paid out about £50,000 during 2014, which is a figure similar to 2013. We are at an advanced stage of preparing our Annual Report, and we can report that our assistance to Napo members was £12,000 more than the amount we received from Napo in their annual donation to us.

### The Trustees & Staff of the Edridge Fund of Napo

## Award winner – Napo News Online ‘Highly Commended’ by the TUC

**Napo was proud and delighted to win two awards in the TUC Communications Awards this year. Napo News Online got a ‘Highly Commended’ in the Best E-Communications Section, and we were also ‘Commended’ in the Best One Off Publication Section for the little AGM booklet ‘What’s the Point of Order’.**

ments for both entries. With regard to Napo News Online the judges said: ‘The team at Napo has created a quality online facility, with no budget, which is attractive to the eye, flexible and popular with members. A fantastic example of using freely available software to respond to demand. The judges also liked the strong member focus’.

With regard to ‘What’s the Point of Order’, the judges commented: ‘This neat little publication is a great way of making a bureaucratic process interesting and understandable. The union certainly achieves what it set out to do: to present a very dry subject in a light-hearted and accessible manner. There is fantastic use of cartoons to lighten and illustrate key points.’

Napo will be certain to enter the Awards again next year.

It is the first time that Napo has entered the TUC awards and we were up against some very stiff competition from much bigger unions with much larger budgets.

We were also delighted with the judges’ com-



General Secretary Ian Lawrence with the Napo Team Tay Burke, Tania Bassett and Kath Falcon, receives the award from TUC President Mohammad Taj.



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  - Any non-work issues such as landlord disputes, neighbourhood disputes, matrimonial and consumer issues
- Criminal law advice
- Free will making service

For employment law & stress cases please speak to your Napo branch representative

### For Napo members and their families we offer:

- Free legal advice and representation on:
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## Register now for AGM 2014

**Don't forget to register for this year's AGM in Scarborough (9–11 October) before 19 September to take advantage of the early bird rate and pay only £45 (£25 retired and unemployed members). After this date the registration fee will be £60 for all categories of member.**

The theme of this year's AGM is 'Unity in Napo' and we will be working hard to make it a conference where we can stand together as Napo members in the face of all the pres-

sures that are trying to divide and split us.

We are confident that new Probation Minister, Andrew Selous, will honour his predecessor, Jeremy Wright's, agreement to speak – and answer questions – on the Thursday. We also have a full programme of interesting key debates, speakers and fringe events; as well as the usual wide range of stalls and exhibitions and live entertainment on both the Thursday and Friday evening.

In addition the Family Court Section

will be holding its AGM on the morning of Thursday 9 October, ahead of the main AGM. This event is free to all FCS members who do not plan to stay for the rest of conference.

**You can register online at [www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk) or download a registration form from the website to return with a cheque.**

**But remember do this BEFORE 19 SEPTEMBER to make sure you get the best rate.**

# UNITY IN NAPO

CONFERENCE  
& AGM  
9–11 OCT 2014  
SCARBOROUGH



## Branch Reps' Training

### '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.**

**If you have any other queries, please contact Cynthia on 020 7223 4887 or email [cgriffith@napo.org.uk](mailto:cgriffith@napo.org.uk)**

**Closing date for registrations – 6 weeks before each course is due to commence. Early registration is recommended.**