

NEWS



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We say: 'Stop the Share Sale!'

On 3 September 200 Napo members descended on Parliament to make their voices heard about the reality of working on the frontline post 1 June. We were joined by over 30 parliamentarians who had specifically come to meet with members from their constituency and to hear from the wide range of speakers and to get a better understanding of the impact of TR.

Shadow Justice Secretary Sadiq Kahn addressed the lobby and was clear in his views that he would do all he can to prevent the share sale and Labour would be fully behind our campaign. MPs Ian Lavery, Sarah Champion and Caroline Lucas were also passionate in their contributions. As Sarah said you cannot fight ideology with logical argument and that is why we need to be creative in our campaign using both political, legal and industrial actions to make TR a public election issue.

Members' Voices

But the main focus of the lobby was members' voices and we heard personal testimonials from Tracey Worth (Napo Cymru), Mike Rayfield (Kent, Surrey and Sussex), Jamie Overland (Essex) and Katie Lomas (West Yorkshire) who were able to give

examples of their experiences and those of their branches.

These personal testimonials are so powerful and all the parliamentarians who attended gave positive feedback about the contributions. We know Grayling is in denial and the only way we can combat that is by members saying how it really is and giving concrete examples of the omnishambles members have to work with. A big thank you to them for putting their argument so clearly.

We were also joined at the lobby by Joe Kuipers, former Board Chair of Avon & Somerset Probation Trust, and David Chantler, former Chief Officer of West



Continued on next page



TUC Congress report
 Page 6



From the Chair
 Page 8



AGM 2014 update
 Page 11

Home Visit to the Justice Secretary

On Saturday 27 September Kent and Surrey Sussex and Greater London Branches will be engaged in a joint operations including a march, demonstration, and mass rally, in Justice Secretary Chris Grayling's constituency of Epsom and Ewell.

We think that it is only right and proper at this stage of the campaign to exercise the rights and freedoms he has sworn to protect and pay him a visit to explain to his constituents why there are a lot of people in the justice system who don't like his policies – in particular those working in probation.

All Napo activists are hereby invited to come and join us at 11am at the Epsom



Playhouse in South Street. We will then march noisily along Epsom High Street leafletting and quite possibly meeting a few of

Grayling's misguided supporters.

There will then be the biggest, loudest, and liveliest rally Epsom has ever seen at Mounthill Gardens where speakers will include: Ian Lawrence, Mike Rayfield, Pat Waterman and Chas Berry plus many more. Bring your friends, family, slight acquaintances, random strangers you made eye contact with briefly on the train, make a banner, dress up/down, bring a whistle etc. etc. - only make sure that you can say you were there and we'll make this an event Grayling & Co will never forget.

For further information contact either surreysussexnapo@outlook.com or daraho.napo@representative.com See you all there.

We say: 'Stop the Share Sale!'

Continued from page 1

Mercia Probation Trust. They made it clear to the lobby that they had stood down on 31 May as they were so opposed to TR they did not feel they could work in the new world.

Positive support

It was a boost for members to hear senior staff speak against TR and to know that



they put their principles first and fully support our campaign. It was also helpful for Labour and other MPs to hear why, in business terms, TR is doomed to fail and that our campaign is not purely about so called 'union self interest' as Grayling would like everyone to believe.

Napo would also like to extend its thanks to John McDonnell who chaired the meeting. John said it was a huge success and to get that many members from around the country to attend Parliament was a real sign of strength. We have come a long way in the last 12 months in turning the Labour Party to gain their full support and it is a direct result of our political pressure both nationally and locally.

Political Climate Change

Earlier this month saw a back bench debate on the bedroom tax which signalled the end of the coalition. Despite having voted in favour of the bedroom tax last year, the Liberal Democrats have now broken away from the coalition. They joined Labour in voting against the Tories resulting in the first of hopefully many defeats of Tory ideology. The pre election period is a critical time for us and we must now take full advantage of the Lib Dems distancing themselves from Tory policy. We need to apply as much pressure to them now as we have to the Labour Party. Members must go and see their Lib Dem MPs to tell them what is happening in their constituencies. Nationally Napo is pressing for an urgent meeting with Nick Clegg to present our arguments and to try to influence Lib Dem policy.

What you can do?

At the lobby many MPs told members that if they receive five or more letters or emails from constituents on a particular issue they have to be seen to be acting on it, and never more so than in the run up to a general election. That's why we need you to get in touch with your MP. Napo is asking Branches and members to start a hard political campaign locally. You can send a letter (model letter available on the website www.napo.org.uk) or email your MP (also via the Napo website).

Copies of our parliamentary briefings



and bulletins can be also be found on the website to help members to raise the key issues. Alternatively you can arrange to meet your MP so they can hear first hand about your experience on the front line.

Tania Bassett



Joint Unions survey is damning indictment of TR shambles

The results of the joint Napo and Unison staff TR survey were published at the start of September. The document – ‘The truth about Transforming Rehabilitation’ was launched and shared with MPs at the Napo national lobby of Parliament on 3 September.

The document is a damning indictment of the TR shambles. More than 1,000 probation workers completed the online survey, giving their verdict on the government’s decision to break up the probation service and sell-off half to profit making private companies, and the impact it is having on the service and on staff.

- 99% of respondents revealed they do not support the government’s probation reforms, while 93% do not believe that the changes will provide value for money for the taxpayer. 98% said they have no confidence in Secretary of State for Justice Chris Grayling.
- The survey also painted a picture of a stressed and demoralised workforce, with almost 80% admitting they have considered leaving their job in the past 12 months, while 55% are actively looking for a new job.
- 74% of respondents say that workloads and pressure has increased since they transferred to the NPS or a CRC, with 86% indicating that stress levels have increased since the transfer. 82% said that staff morale has decreased following the transfer, with 46% of members identifying themselves as ‘extremely stressed.’
- 84% would not recommend their own occupation as a career to others, showing that there is now a real crisis amongst probation professionals.



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The Probation Service is one of the most successful and efficient public services. It plays a vital role in rehabilitating people, protecting victims and keeping communities safe.

The unions are calling on the government to urgently halt its agenda to privatise the service amid rising concerns that the plans could put public safety at risk and are having a detrimental impact on its staff and service users. 91% of those surveyed said they don’t believe that service provision will improve for users under the government’s Transforming Rehabilitation agenda.

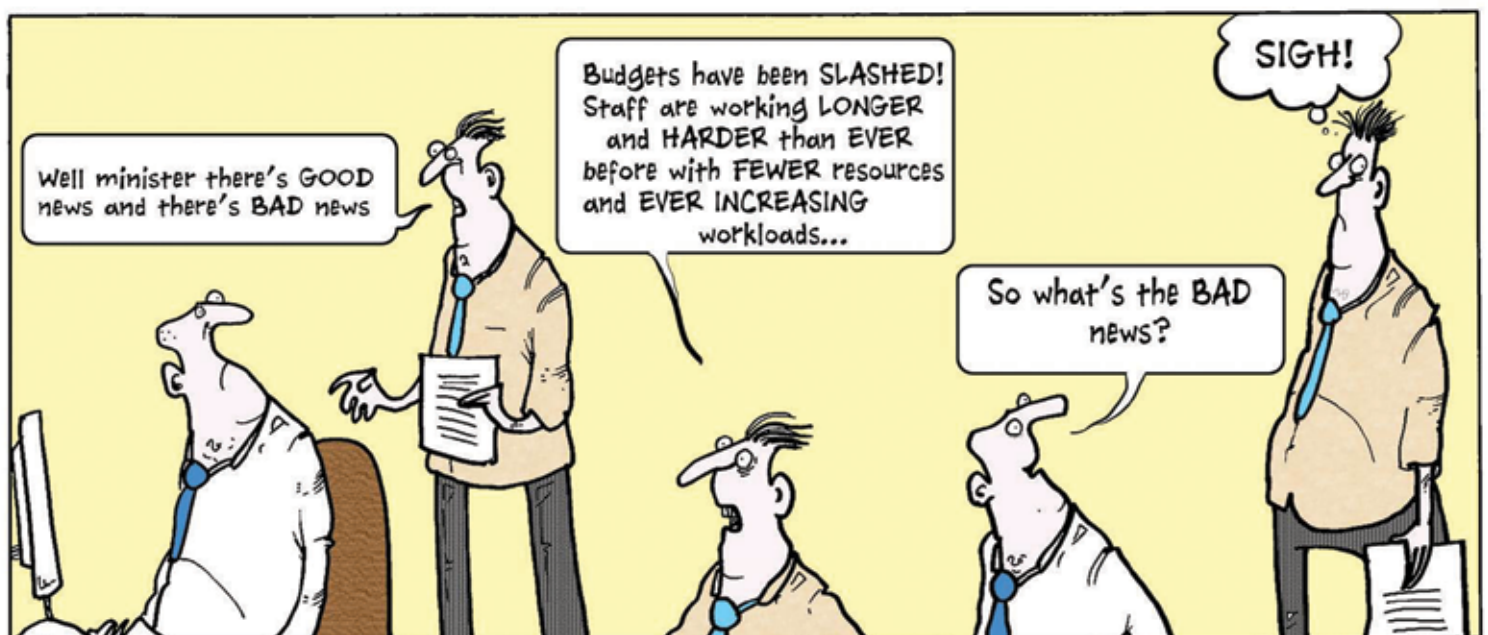
The results of the survey were also sent to the Justice Select Committee.

Napo General Secretary, Ian Lawrence, told the press: ‘We have been campaign-

ing against these dangerous reforms since they were announced last year. Our campaign now has the support of the Labour Party as well as many stakeholders both in Probation and in the wider criminal justice system. They are untried and untested and will undermine public protection if they go ahead’.

You can download a copy of the full survey at <https://www.napo.org.uk/news/probation-workers-survey-delivers-vote-no-confidence-tr> or order a paper copy from Kath Falcon kfalcon@napo.org.uk

Napo is suggesting that ALL members email the link to the survey to their MP, or go and see them taking a copy. You can find and email your MP from the Napo website – <https://www.napo.org.uk/campaigning>



Ian Lawrence writes



Ian with Napo Vice Chair Yvonne Pattison at TUC.

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Napo still making an impact in and outside of the TUC

We are once again taking our ongoing efforts to highlight the folly of Grayling's TR programme out there into the autumn conferences, but this will be the last such season before the next election.

The volatility of the electorate was last demonstrated in the May Euro and Council elections and it shows little sign of subsiding given the events that have been taking place in Scotland.

So our efforts at this week's TUC (see below), and the forthcoming Labour, Tory and LibDem party conferences are pivotal activities which help to generate even more bad publicity for this Condem coalition that is hanging on by its bootstraps on a whole range of issues.

A Lib Dem U-turn?

News that rebel Lib Dem MPs had blocked the second reading of the 'Bedroom Tax' legislation in the commons was a real encouragement as we headed to Liverpool last week. As I write we are about to launch a new charm offensive on Messrs Clegg, Cable, Hughes and Alexander. We do so with a sense that the wheels are starting to come loose on a whole host of issues and obviously we hope to try and put some distance between Clegg's people and the Tories on the TR agenda.

I also want to thank those branch activists and members who have been following up the contact that they made before and during the excellent Parliamentary rally and Lobby which you can read all about elsewhere in this issue and in the Campaign

Bulletin, which you will find along with a wealth of material on the Napo website.

ILO

We hope to have a bit more to say about this by the time we reach Scarborough for the AGM but you will recall that we submitted a joint application along with Unison and GMB which contends that the existing London CP contract which Serco was awarded and the plans under TR for this work to be privatised, breaches the International Labour Organisation convention on the use of forced labour. Our application has been accepted by the ILO who has formed a tripartite committee to consider the claims.

Meanwhile we have followed this up with another joint unions' letter to Karen Bradley the Minister with responsibility for the fight against Modern Slavery and Organised Crime seeking a meeting with her on this issue.

Napo at the TUC

A fuller report of our work at this year's TUC appears elsewhere in Napo News, but I wanted to express my personal appreciation to the Napo delegation who took a full interest in what transpired and were great ambassadors for the union.

Congress gives small unions such as ours a great opportunity to get our messages across at the showpiece debates but also to diversify in terms of contributing to the discussions that take place around the conference fringes. This year Tania Bassett and I covered four separate and well attended meetings where we were able to explain the issues of importance to our

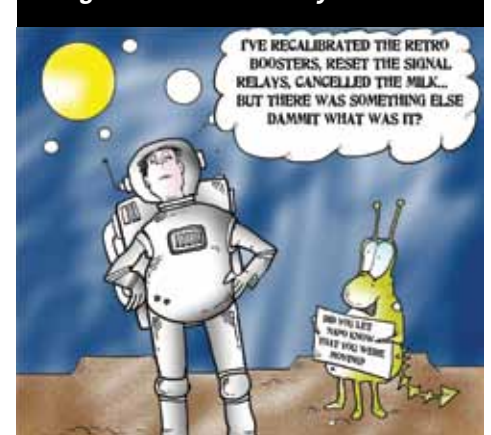
members in Probation and Family Courts to a wider audience, and help to shape ideas about what the union movement ought to be doing on behalf of its six million plus members to campaign on issues such as the economy, jobs, housing and benefits together with trade union rights and international issues.

The contributions from National Vice Chair Yvonne Pattison on motion 46 opposing the sale of Children's Services was excellent as were the two speeches by Tania on the crisis in the justice system and in the 'Great Pay Robbery' debate which were both hosted by the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group to which Napo is an affiliate.

AGM beckons

If you are planning to head up to Scarborough I can promise you a range of great speakers, passionate debates, absorbing fringe events and a chance to tell a Minister what a shambles we think TR is. Add to this some fabulous entertainment and a really diverse exhibition area that will feature among many others, our long standing friends and generous sponsors Thompsons, No more Page 3, Amnesty International, anti-stalking campaigners Paladin and Show Racism the Red Card, and it all suggests an event not to be missed if you can help it.

Have you moved home or office? Are you taking a career break? Have you retired?



We need to know if we are to make sure you are getting information from Napo and that you don't unintentionally lapse or pay too much in subs. So please, please, please let us know of any changes...

Contact membership: 020 7223 4887
Email membership@napo.org.uk
Notify us via www.napo.org.uk
Write to Napo
4 Chivalry Road, London SW11 1HT

Trade Unions Congress 2014: Britain needs a pay rise

Having attended this year's TUC in Liverpool from 7 to 10 September, I would like to share some of my experiences with fellow Napo members. This was my very first TUC and I enjoyed every minute of it. The weather was great throughout, the comradery of the Napo team was priceless and the learning experience unique.

The TUC theme for this year was, appropriately: 'Britain Needs a Pay Rise'. Over the three days in Liverpool, Congress carried out its core business of discussing, debating and adopting the numerous motions under the efficient and unflappable TUC president Mohammed Taj. The motions included a very wide range of issues and were introduced by the unions most closely associated with each issue. The main Napo motion was to mobilise resources against the privatisation of criminal justice. Or was that the criminal privatisation of justice? I forget now. The delegates from the various unions spoke passionately to their motions. Our General Secretary Ian Lawrence introduced the Napo motion with his irrepresible zeal and it was carried unanimously. Yvonne Pattison, Napo Vice Chair also presented convincing arguments for the cause.

Guest speakers at the TUC included, among others, Labour MPs Chuka Umunna and Angela Eagle as well as the Governor

of the Bank of England, Mark Carney. They were subjected to intelligent and probing questions from the gathered unionists.

The fringe meetings at the TUC were as numerous and as varied as the unions themselves. At the meeting to discuss the privatisation of Probation and Prisons, our Napo Press Officer, Tania Bassett, made a strong case against Chris Grayling's destructive privatisation programme and highlighted the outstanding achievements of the Probation service, recognised by various awards won in the recent past.

The attending of branch meetings and AGMs is unquestionably a fundamental requirement for those who hold their

union close to the heart. It builds cohesion, promotes democracy and strengthens our voice. The TUC, however, allows one to realise that we are part of a much larger family of unions and that most members share our values of fairness, equality, inclusiveness and the need to eradicate social injustice. TUC 2014 was an uplifting experience for me and if I took one thing from the Congress, it is the recognition that we are not alone in the good fight. I remembered the words of Edmund Burke spoken so many years ago, 'All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing'.

Nizam Salyani
Napo member and Union Rep

Calling all members – take to the streets on 18 October

Napo members are asked to turn out in force for the TUC demonstration in London on 18 October.

Let's show this government what we think of its policies. It will also be a crucial opportunity to get support from the rest of the labour and trade union movement for Napo's campaign to STOP THE SHARE SALE!

Further information about what branches can do to organise for a mass turnout will be sent out in the coming weeks and available at AGM – in the meantime branches and members are asked to:

Put the date in your diary now

Encourage colleagues, friends and family to join you on the demo

Go to the TUC website <http://britainneedsapayrise.org/> and pledge support

Contact your branch to let them know you will be going

**JOIN US AT THE
MARCH AND RALLY
SATURDAY
18 OCTOBER
2014**

**£££
BRITAIN
NEEDS A
PAY RISE**

TUC

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN AT
BRITAINNEEDSAPAYRISE.ORG
@PAYRISE4BRITAIN #18OCT

**ASSEMBLE 11AM AT
BLACKFRIARS EMBANKMENT
FOR MARCH TO HYDE PARK**

TUC backs Napo's Stop the Share Sale campaign

One of Napo's two resolutions to this year's TUC Congress in Liverpool called on the TUC to support Napo's public and political campaign to halt the TR timetable and prevent the share sale of the CRCs. It also asked for support for Napo's alternative plans to assist the under 12-month custodial community through the public sector and for the TUC to call on an incoming Labour government to revoke any contracts awarded this side of the next general election.

The resolution, which was composited and seconded by the POA, was carried unanimously and the campaign to Stop the Share Sale is now TUC policy.

Moving the motion, General Secretary Ian Lawrence, made an impassioned speech which made the front page of the Morning Star under the headline 'Blood on Your Hands Grayling?'

Ian told Congress that Napo had warned that TR would 'be dangerous and a disaster'. He said: 'At that time we expected that our old, but not so favourite privateers Serco and G4s would be leading the pack of vultures ready to swoop down and utilise their offender management skills fresh on their respective successes of applying electronic tags to dead people and transporting non-existent prisoners to Court.'

Fortunately, even their mate Grayling had to baulk at involving them as prime bidders in the 21 contract package areas, but since then it has emerged that the likes of Carillion, Sodexo, Capita, A4e and Sentinel are hovering in their place, indeed I would like to tell Congress who else is in the list of shame but Grayling and his army of boot-licking jobsworths at the MoJ aren't saying as they have decided that it's not in the public interest.

10 year contracts worth around £8 billion of taxpayers money, not being in the public interest? Comrades he really is taking liberties; a justice secretary who is not only arrogant and unfit for purpose and the worst we've surely ever seen in British history, but one who has lied to Parliament about his dreadful staff assignment process, presided over a so called procurement process that is about as corrupt an exercise of commercial malfeasance that has ever been visited on the British taxpayer, and has pressed ahead regardless with his ideological social experiment against all expert opinion.'

TR chaos

He told Congress delegates about: Staff shortages leading to caseloads of over 70; 2,000 cases left unallocated and unsupervised; Probation officers with 20+ years' experience being told they 'no longer have the capacity' to assess risk or write reports;



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and Service users being left with no supervision.

Blood on your hands

Ian concluded: 'The MOJ repeatedly say, there is no crisis. Transforming Rehabilitation is working just fine and we

simply need to iron out a couple of local issues with IT.

Well it's not fine Grayling. This summer two Napo members took their own lives because they could no longer take the pressure that Transforming Rehabilitation has put them under. One of whom chose to write her own eulogy where she cited Grayling as murdering the probation service, and that she could no longer cope with the probation service she had dedicated 20 years of her life to.

And an offender slipping through the cracks created by this train crash who proceeded to murder a former partner in July; already a convicted perpetrator of domestic violence he slipped off the map during the process of being transferred from the National Probation Service to the Community Rehabilitation Company who had no access to his records.

Grayling you have blood on your hands. ***Ian's speech can be found in full on Napo News Online and the Napo website.***

Mind the Union Gap

'Induction?', the man in the soldier's uniform asks. We look around, checking the room numbers. 'Yes', we answer hesitantly. 'Right', he barks, get against that wall, stand there, don't speak and wait for your next instruction'.

Again we look at each other not sure if we were in the right place. We speak and are told to be quiet. I laugh and next thing a female soldier is in front of me shouting – 'what's so funny? Be quiet, stop fidgeting'. Others arrive and are stunned into silence by their treatment. Two leave. We are given a number and marched into the room where the male soldier barks the instructions of our task at us. We are told that we are lucky to be here – better than outside the wall – if we fail, that's where we will end up and it's made clear that it is the last place we would want to be – outside the wall. I stand opposite my colleague. We make eye contact and again I burst out laughing. The soldiers bear down on me; screaming and shouting. I am marched to the corner and made to stand facing the wall with my hands on my head. I hear my colleague question the task and she is given the same treatment. We are returned to our spots. We attempt to complete the task with the soldiers shouting at us. They invade your space, shout in your face, threaten that you will be outside the wall and this is our last chance. Some challenge the treatment and are shouted down. One person gets quietly on with the task

and is praised. I think; if this is what I have to put up with I would rather be outside the wall.

When I attended TUC Congress as part of the delegation. I certainly had not anticipated spending part of an afternoon being screamed at for fun. This interactive performance by the Banner Theatre group was designed to simulate a world where unions had no role. On the second day we attended another performance where unions had more of an active role and this was certainly a much more pleasant experience. Listening to the different motions heard on the main floor of TUC, it certainly opened my eyes to the wider impact that unions can have, especially at a time when I have become very inwardly focussed (being more concerned about the immediate impact on my own workload).

At a time of cuts and austerity there are people out there campaigning for a fair wage, challenging the use of zero hour contracts, challenging discrimination on a national and global scale, giving people a voice at work, and demanding our rights to decent services and welfare. It is through collective action that we can achieve our goals. Hearing the voices of other unions raised together was certainly an inspiring break from the daily grind and has given me a renewed determination to fight back – even if it means I am threatened with being placed outside the wall!

Joanne Perkins

TUC – on the fringe

Napo was also represented at a number of fringe events at this year's TUC Congress.

General Secretary Ian Lawrence shared a platform with Matt Wrack (FBU), Christine Blower (NUT), Mark Serwotka (PCS), Peter Pinkney (RMT) and John McDonnell MP at the TUCG fringe on 'Building the fight against austerity'. This meeting was looking at the need for coordinated action across all fronts if we are to maintain the pressure and make the issue of austerity central to the forthcoming General Election.

Fighting Austerity

Ian told the well-attended fringe that the UK electorate is being sold smoke and mirrors about an economic recovery. 'The reality of course is food banks, loan sharks, zero hour contracts and further blatant attacks on the basic employment rights of working people.'

Ian said: 'privatisation is a spreading evil entity that is bleeding the British taxpayer dry and has seen its tentacles reach into every corner of our public services: health, education, transport, utilities and the justice sector where even the dead got an electronic monitoring tag courtesy of G4s who obviously found that a bit easier than legging it after live offenders! And now the probation service, a public institution that has helped to turn lives around and protect our communities for over 100 years, now finding itself in operational disarray due to the odious ideology of Chris Grayling, whose reckless reforms directly threaten public safety.'

He told delegates: 'the collective mes-

sage from here today to anyone who gives a damn about what is really happening to the UK economy is that unless we see the introduction of a social agenda for all then we will witness an economic meltdown for millions of workers and their families and whilst Napo has yet to reach a position in the probation service that will allow us to take industrial action over pay, as we are not yet in formal dispute, we stand ready to join the wider struggle.'

The Great Pay Robbery

Napo National Official, Tania Bassett, spoke at a second TCGU meeting 'The Great Pay Robbery' alongside Janice Godrich (PCS), Kevin Courtney (NUT), Ronnie Draper (BFAWU) and Matt Wrack. This fringe looked at how the union movement and working class communities can fight back against what amounts to an unparalleled collapse in real wages since the financial crash of 2008.

Tania told the meeting: '75% of probation staff are women, many of whom are single parents and having to supplement their income with benefits. It is a sad indictment of this government that in 2014, highly skilled professionals are unable to survive on their income alone.'

She also told delegates that: 'Napo members also work with those in the community that are being hardest hit by this coalition's Dickensian approach to welfare. The befriending funds that Probation has historically used to help clients in an emergency are now being used to help them pay for basics such as electricity.'

She added: 'many probation clients resort

to pay day lenders and accrue extortionate rates of interest on loans they may never be able to repay. 'This government has crippled working families in this country and labour must make a strong stand on reversing this and putting in place legislation to control the Wonga vultures'.

Attack on most vulnerable

She told the meeting that disabled people have been the hardest hit by these so called welfare reforms, citing her own experience in relation to her brother in law who has significant learning difficulties and also suffers from epilepsy and cerebral palsy.

'Whilst he is able to live independently he requires daily care to assist with his medication, shopping and money management. He also requires benefits to keep his independence and is reliant on these to pay for his carers. Benefits that this government threatened to take off him last year because he wasn't in full time employment. He had to attend an assessment to prove he was not able to work. We had months of worry that Paul would be forced by this government to return to his mother's home, and she would be forced, at 73 years old to provide all of his care.'

What was even more galling about this was the fact that Paul has held down a part time job at the local garden centre for 25 years. Not many people in this day and age can say that. Thanks to significant intervention from his GP we were able to prove that Paul was not able to work full time and his benefits thus far have remained in place. But for me it was a real wake up call to just how far this con dem coalition will go to rob the vulnerable under the auspices of so called austerity cuts'.

Tania concluded: 'These are the stories we need to be getting out into the public domain. As a movement we need to educate not just our members but also the public about the wider issues of low wages and reduced benefits. We need to raising awareness that the government has a political agenda of divide and rule. That being poor is not a crime and that decent wages that enable people to live without benefits is a basic human right and not a privilege.'



L to r: Tania Bassett, Yvonne Pattison, Nizan Salyani, TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady, Ian Lawrence, Deb Borgen, Joanna Perkins and Annoesjka Valent.

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www.napo.org.uk

From the Chair

It's been an interesting couple of months. After being given the nod by the NEC to lead the union I have dedicated so much time and sweat to represent over the years the first challenge I faced was getting facility time! For nearly a fortnight my request bounced around the NPS hierarchy like a CRC bid in NOMS. As you will know the government has been determined to limit trade union activity by hook or, some might say mostly, by crook. The national Chair has always been a full time post – until now!



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When I first made my request no one in my new employing organisation knew what to do. My line manager was uncertain so passed it to the Divisional Deputy Director; she wasn't sure so my line manager put the ball back in my court, stating I needed to contact Colin Allars for permission. I did! And by the way am still awaiting a direct response. Eventually Ian Lawrence was able to get agreement via the NOMS HR lead for NPS. I have been granted 50% facility time so I am having to do the Chairing duties whilst carrying on with my day job! Fortunately, we are a bit more efficient and effective at Napo.

Mysterious

I recount this sorry tale because those of you in the NPS will be as frustrated as I am that an organisation first mooted more than 18 months ago is still far from fit for purpose. Apart from the magical mystery tour that masqueraded as the staff split the new national service has been equally mysterious. Several new IT functions, an electronic HR system (that no one in the field has been trained to use), staff shortages, and a plethora of interface systems tell just a small part of the ongoing stresses facing NPS colleagues. Three months from its inception the NPS hierarchy has still to determine what job titles to give its staff. Hopefully, we will again be Probation Officers, after all it is the National Probation Service!

For colleagues in the CRC life isn't much better. We know that all over England and Wales caseloads in CRC offender management rose exponentially because of the split. This seems to have been due to a number of factors, which coupled with the transfer of a significant proportion of domestic abuse cases from the NPS, has increased the pressure on Napo members considerably. I have also been made aware of additional performance pressures on staff employed in CRCs still involved in the mutual sham-

bles. And all the while the clock has been ticking towards that great unknown, untried and untested share sale!

Grayling's gift

Ah yes, the great Grayling gift to his party's backers in the City. Despite Herculean efforts by Napo officers and officials to get up-to-date information out of NOMS about the sell-off of CRCs there has been an almost blanket refusal to divulge any information about the bidders, not even the names of the eighty organisations the Secretary of State so loudly trumpeted during the Parliamentary lobby on 3 September. This despite the fact a number of the bidders have been broadcasting this information at a local level for weeks!

Your elected national officers and officials will continue to press NOMS for this and other pertinent information as we all do our damndest to stop privatisation in its tracks.

With all this going on I haven't had a great deal of time to review the workings of our union. My initial thoughts are that there are a lot of good people, officers and officials, doing a lot of good work on all

our behalfs. That said, my initial observations are that some of that work needs to be a little more coordinated, a smidgen more directed and a pinch more efficient. I will pass on my thoughts and suggestions before handing over to Yvonne Pattison and Chris Winters at the AGM.

Family Courts

Finally, I just want to say, not as an afterthought, but because I believe inclusion is a foundation stone of our union, with all the focus on the trials of probation at the moment it is all too easy to forget about colleagues working in Cafcass. Life in the family courts service hasn't been too comfortable over the past few years and it is essential this division of Napo is fully represented at national as well as local level. The officials continue to represent members working in the family courts, but it is also important to have a national officer able to better represent the issues at the 'court face'. It has been too long now since Napo had a Family Court Section Vice-Chair and I would sing from the rafters (not a pretty sound) if someone was willing to take this challenge on by the time of the AGM.

Stick together one and all!

Chris Pearson
National Chair

'Stick Together with Napo'

Napo's recruitment and organising campaign, 'Stick Together with Napo, will continue to run through 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.

The TR 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 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.

Napo nationally is providing a 'Guide to Organising and

Recruitment' and a selection of promotional material is available including posters, leaflets, coasters, post it notes, pens and lanyards – to order contact Margaret Pearce mpearce@napo.org.uk. Napo is also offering local and regional training for new activists – find out more via your branch or for information on New Ways to Train contact Cynthia Griffith cgriffith@napo.org.uk
For general advice and support contact Ranjit Singh rsingh@napo.org.uk



Justice Questions



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Sadiq Khan addresses Napo's rally on 3 September.

On 9 September the first of the Justice Questions sessions since the return of Parliament after the recess took place. Napo is stunned at the level of delusion Grayling is showing in his responses and will be working hard to challenge his continuing misleading of parliament. It was however positive to see MPs questioning him on our behalf and using our successful lobby to highlight just how strongly members feel about TR.

The results of the joint union staff survey about TR were also used by MPs to highlight Napo members' low morale and whilst Grayling tried to dismiss it as not being representative, our 10% turn out stands up to government opinion polls and as such is a valid piece of research to help our campaign. Below are some of the key questions that were asked of the Lord Chancellor and his dismissive answers.

Caroline Lucas: Does the right hon. Gentleman agree that it is deeply worrying that a recent survey of probation workers shows that more than 90% disagree with the view that the changes will provide value for money for the taxpayer, or improve service provision for users – they talk about spiralling work loads, stress, and dysfunctional IT? When will he stop ignoring the experts and admit that the best option to reduce reoffending and protect public safety would be to cancel the probation sell-off and re-integrate the two parts of the service at the earliest opportunity?

Chris Grayling (CG): I take greater comfort from the fact that 90% of probation officers chose not to respond to their union's survey and are getting on with the job, the excellent work they do on a day-by-day basis, and their good work to help the new systems bed in.

John McDonnell: I find the Secretary of State's complacency extremely worrying. Two hundred probation officers turned up last week to lobby their MPs, all of them consistently reporting that the system is not working. The Secretary of State refused

to undertake pilot schemes in advance of these reforms, but he did enact what he described as assessments called test gates. There have been three of those. The fourth was meant to start on 1 June but I believe it has not started yet. Will he publish all the information from the test gates, so that we can see what they have reported regarding the implementation of the reforms?

CG: These reforms are going exactly according to plan and no test gate was due to start in June. We are on time and the teams on the ground are making good progress. I and my colleagues have visited the trust's successor organisations, and members of my team are going out to hear what is happening on the ground. This is a nine-month process of delivering change in the public sector, before we reach the point of a change of ownership. We are trying to ensure that the new system is bedded in well, and so far I am happy with the progress being made. There is, of course, still work to be done, but good progress is being made.

Sadiq Khan: As usual, the Justice Secretary has his head in the sand. He was warned against his plans to privatise the probation service, but he ignored those

warnings. Preferred bidders were supposed to be announced this week, but now he tells us it will be before the end of the year. There were supposed to be dozens and dozens of private companies, charities and voluntary groups bidding for the contracts, but there are not – in some areas, only one company is bidding for a contract. Staff – both those who respond to surveys and those who do not – are complaining of chaos at the probation service. Morale is at a record low and experienced and dedicated staff are leaving. Given that, are there any circumstances in which he would put a stop to the botched privatisation of the probation service?

CG: I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman is plain wrong. He needs to stop listening to the trade unions; of course the trade unions still think this is a bad idea, but in reality our reforms are bedding in well and we will deliver the changes necessary to provide support and supervision to people who get none at the moment. The Labour party has no answers about how it would deliver that. On competition, the right hon. Gentleman's facts are plain wrong. I think we have 86 bids, with an average of four bidders in each area and a good mix of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. I am completely confident that we will shortly deliver a really innovative approach to rehabilitation, despite the blind opposition of the Labour party.

Tania Bassett

For a full transcript of the questions visit www.parliament.uk/business/publications and go to debates by date (9 September)

Edridge need help?

We keep on asking for money, but did you notice that quite a few times we have been asking for help? Sometimes we are asking for new Trustees, and this year we had competition for the Trustee vacancy; but our pleas for volunteers to do various things has produced absolutely no interest. Yes, we know that you are all going through the biggest upheaval the Probation Service has seen in decades, but actually that pressure has been felt by Edridge in a number of ways – subject for another piece here some time!

At AGM last year we made noises that we needed help with our website, and of course a couple of offers came from enthusiastic website makers, but what we really needed was a journalist. We did mention help with spreadsheets in a previous *Napo News*, but I guess people get frightened when the 's'



word comes up, but we really just needed somebody who would be meticulous, and did not need to be a spreadsheet 'fiend'.

The point is that there are a whole range of self-contained tasks that we need to do, but it may not help if we just give out a list. The defining thing would be to hear from people who would like to help us, and could promise a fixed amount of time to do it. This could be a couple of hours a week, or a month, or a longer time once a year in a block – the variations are almost infinite. If people came to us with that, we would then look at the skills they have to offer, and try I build a voluntary task around that.

So do not be shy! Get in touch with us, or even better come and see us at Scarborough – you can talk to us with no obligation.

The Trustees & Staff of the Edridge Fund of Napo

Hazards Conference 2014 – the experience of a Hazards ‘virgin’

My outstanding memory of the 2014 Hazards Conference is being outed as a Hazards ‘virgin’. However that aside I found the experience a very interesting and at times challenging one. (The main challenge being finding my room!). I would recommend anyone attending to make efforts to arrive on the Friday to make the most of finding your bearings, enjoying the lovely dinner and listening to the first key note speakers in the evening.

The venue is Keele University which is actually better than you might expect. The food was plentiful and excellent; the rooms basic but clean and there were bars within easy walking distance for continuing your networking past the official hours. Minibuses were laid on throughout the conference although I found walking was just as easy with use of the maps placed around the site at regular points.

The Conference offers some really good keynote speakers from an international background. I personally found Aida Ponce del Castillo (Senior Researcher and Head of Unit: Working conditions, health and safety at the ETUI – European Trade union institute) especially interesting. Her speech on

the proposed new Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) was very informative. The recurring theme of the USA as a warning for the future of Europe was one which echoed through the three days. Ms Ponce del Castillo’s speech along with all the speakers’ presentations will be available on the Hazards Website (once re-launched).

The weekend is a very interactive one with most of the time spent in workshops and long breaks for networking. Of the workshops I attended I was most impressed with the Stress one – a subject of particular interest and concern to Probation in the present times. However there were many other subjects including suicide at work, campaigning, asbestos, and bullying / harassment

to name just a few. For a H&S Rep of a small union this was a major eye-opener on the wider world of H&S and I think every Rep should attend at least once if possible.

Amanda Fisher
Co-chair of Napo’s National Health and Safety Committee



L to r: Sue O’Mahoney from Kent, Surrey and Sussex branch, Adele Hill from Essex branch, me, Amanda Fisher from the Four Shires branch and Tony Struch from Essex branch.



8th November 2014

2pm-5pm

Amazingly tickets are just £15, so please join us for a special afternoon tea at the exclusive The Cube at the Hotel Indigo. A time to celebrate CIP’s history and all that God has done through CIP. A time to look forward to the future, and commit its opportunities and challenges to God.



Enquiries: simon.may@probation.gsi.gov.uk

Bookings by 28th October: Zoe Richardson
07761498160



60th Anniversary Tea at The Cube, Hotel Indigo, Birmingham BI IRS



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Napo AGM 2014 – 9-11 October, Scarborough

Napo is gearing up for the 2014 AGM at the Spa Complex Scarborough (Thursday 9 to Saturday 11 October).

We have a great line up of special guest speakers at this year's AGM, a range of over 25 motions from members and branches to discuss, a packed programme of fringe events on the Thursday and Friday evenings and Friday lunchtime, a full exhibition hall with stalls from Napo's National Committees, the Staff Association, and campaign and voluntary groups, and some splendid entertainment planned for both evenings of conference.

Speakers

AGM starts at 2pm on Thursday 9 October with the Chair's opening address followed by formal business. We will also hear from Elfyn Llwyd MP and John McDonnell MP, who will update members on parliamentary and extra-parliamentary campaigning against the government's privatisation and cuts programme.

On the Friday morning we have the

Justice Minister, Andrew Selous, as a key note speaker. This will be followed by the Probation Professional session featuring a Question Time panel event with panellists Shadow Justice Minister, Jenny Chapman; criminal defence solicitor Matt Foot; Professor Loraine Gelsthorp from Cambridge University; and Sally Lewis, former Avon and Somerset Probation Trust CEO. While the Family Court Professional Session will hear from guest speaker Lucy Reed, family Barrister and author of the Pink Tape Blog.

On Friday afternoon we have special guest speaker Phyll Opoku-Gyimah. Phyll will be speaking about her work as Director and Co-Founder of UK Black Pride.

Fringes

Fringe meetings this year include: Show Racism the Red Card; Learning and Development – the Shape of Things to Come; Women Offenders in the Justice System (WIN); Fighting back against 'Workplace Stress' (H&S); Domestic Violence and Stalkers' Register – the need

for law reform (Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service); Safeguarding Children (Professional Committee); an Audience with Jonathan Robinson, former prisoner and author of IN-IT; and a Campaign Songs Workshop. There will also, as usual be a managers hour, a PSO gathering, a joint Staff Associations Meeting and Edridge, ABPO and LAGIP receptions.

Evening entertainment this year is provided by the UK's number 1 Jive and Swing band, the Jive Aces (Thursday) and local party band, and Napo favourite, the fantastic Goosehorns (Friday).

Not too late to register

If you have not already registered for Conference you can do so up to and at AGM.

Register NOW – online at www.napo.org.uk or download a form from the website and send in with a cheque.

Any problems registering and for more information contact Kath Falcon kfalcon@napo.org.uk 020 7223 4887.

We look forward to seeing you at Scarborough.



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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

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