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## Protestors gather to defend Magna Carta

**21 February 2015 saw the start of the Relay for Rights march from Runnymede to Westminster in protest against Grayling's shambolic Global Law Summit. The summit, which took place from 23–25 February in Westminster, cost just £1,700 per ticket and was designed by the Justice Secretary to 'celebrate' Magna Carta and access to justice for all.**

There was limited representation at the summit of professionals working within the criminal justice sector, and by limited we mean only the Chair of the Criminal Bar, and most of the sponsors and invited guests were oligarchs and investors. As such the Justice Alliance organised our own Not the Global Law summit protest.

The Relay for Rights was a 42 mile walk over three days carrying a copy of the Magna Carta from Runnymede to Westminster with various organisations being represented along the route. Tania Bassett, Napo National Official, attended the start at the Magna Carta Memorial where the three main clauses of the charter were read out. Speakers from Unite and lawyer Rhona Freedman, one of the key organisers, talked about why Magna Carta was important and why we need to protect

it from being sold off to investors and privateers. Guy Tilsbury, Kent, Surrey, Sussex branch joined the march on Sunday and despite the dreadful weather walked the whole of the second leg finishing at Putney.

### Westminster Rally

The march ended on Monday 23 February with a procession of around 100 people walking into Westminster with King John Grayling (the effigy with a medieval make over) and a merry band of minstrels.

The rally, which was held at Old Palace Yard, was attended by several hundred trade unionists, lawyers, barristers and campaigners. Guest speakers included Napo General Secretary, Ian Lawrence; Paul Nowak, from the TUC; Marcia Rigg, whose brother Sean Rigg died in Police custody; Shadow Solicitor General, Karl Turner MP; representatives from the Criminal Law Solicitors Association; Matt Foot, founder of the Justice Alliance and the key organiser of the event; and the actor Maxine Peake, who starred in the drama Silk. A letter of support from the actress Emma Thompson was also read out.

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# The Pay Ice Age: we need to talk about pay

**The public sector pay freeze, instituted by the last government post the 2008 crash and consolidated by the coalition's austerity dogma, has developed into an Ice Age. Consequently, when a thaw comes the pay landscape will inevitably look very different from the pre-Ice Age environment. This is the second of a series of articles in which Napo Assistant General Secretary Dean Rogers explores what this means for Napo members and public sector policy makers. These papers will support a detailed conversation that Napo is embarking on with members and employers over the coming months as we seek to influence critical planning outcomes.**

There is a critical, stark choice facing everyone with a stake in decent public services - give it up because it's too expensive and too hard or start making and winning the argument for the resources and space to make it work better.

This is clear in probation and family courts. On the surface both continue to be delivering as high a level of service as has ever been the case. Yet far from being rewarded with additional resource and the trust to invest and innovate, the coalition's dogmatic distrust of all things public has dismissed this success as not good enough. Reforms forced upon the service waste resources, increase workloads, break up teamworking in place of isolation, and

erode trust.

Across public services, destructive elements combine to cause a destructive whirlwind - Government constantly tells people that public services are too expensive and can't work. Even where they retain public confidence they say we can't afford them. Resources are cut and targets set to disprove this political doubt. Each time these targets are met the dogmatists think it must be because the targets weren't high enough and/or that targets themselves are a way of improving performance. The first cycle is set.

Meanwhile, the public are told things aren't working. They were quite happy previously but now start to pay attention. If they don't they're forced to as resources are cut to a point where they need to do it themselves, e.g. Legal Aid cuts and the rise of Litigants in Person. Paying more attention, listening more carefully and prompted by a reactive media, they recognise failures more frequently. They start to just hear the sensational bad news and think there must actually be a problem after all. As their own living standards are frozen or worse by austerity and having lost trust in politicians and institutions generally, they start to question why they keep giving their money to the same politicians who keep shouting about not making our public services work. Their cycle is set.

In the middle are public sector workers. Everything is utterly reliant on their maintaining sense and order. But if their bosses don't trust them and the public don't trust them, disengagement grows. Staff become demoralised, and redundancies are snapped up by long serving, experienced staff. The Pay Ice Age freezes out many others. Fewer numbers working harder increases sickness rates and reduces productivity. Recruitment becomes ever harder - partly because starting pay is ludicrously low, especially in professional work with graduates already landed with debt that would've sent their parents to an early grave; partly because progression is too slow to see any improvement; and partly because the job gets such a bad press. The psychological contract is strained to breaking point.

## The Big Choice

So we come to the big choice.

Something has to jam these interlocking cycles of despair. We can all hope for salvation at the ballot box but whatever cocktail of pills survivors are on to keep going it's unlikely most will feel that optimistic - our services haven't yet failed spectacularly enough or often enough for the public to vote for a mini-revolution. This means the job falls to the workforce.

## Breaking the cycle

If we all accept enough is enough and this can't go on how do we break the cycle? The simplistic, traditional union way would be to strike and just stop everything. If this can be delivered, it would certainly get people's attention, but in itself is not enough and won't work until we have a fully formed, workable strategy to present as an alternative to continued cuts and dogma. And unions need to be honest as well. People showing the unprecedented level of dedication and commitment to keep delivering public services despite all of the difficulties aren't going to just stop, certainly without being behind an agenda they're engaged with and committed to. Unions who just focus on telling the world how hard it is for their members actually accelerate the wheels of despair and distance workers from them by sounding like they're against the service itself. Unions need to offer real hope.

## Napo's Big Conversation

That's why Napo wants a conversation with members and potential members at all levels in probation and family courts. We know the problems and can be the focus for championing a better alternative. Between now and when big decisions are taken after May's General Election we can start offering a positive alternative strategy. The new owners of CRCs, the NPS and Cafcass will be ever more reliant on the survivors, and Napo can be your voice, not just on pay but professional concerns and critical day-to-day working practices that underpin all outcomes e.g.: training and support, especially for dumped-on line managers; better support to manage stress, protect mental health and public safety; defining and maintaining grade boundaries and career paths to promote security in doing what's expected; etc.

There are no simple answers to complex questions. As Billy Bragg says, 'A poet with all the answers has never yet been built'. So much of the modern environment reinforces this and tells us to beware anyone who claims otherwise. But because answers are complex it doesn't mean they can't be found together. The alternative starts here!

**Dean Rogers**

## Stand up to racism and fascism

No to scapegoating immigrants • No to Islamophobia  
No to anti-Semitism • Yes to diversity



UN Anti-Racism Day Demonstration

Saturday 21 March 2015

Assemble 12 noon  
March followed by rally in Trafalgar Square,  
central London

#M21

Organised by: Stand up to Racism  
www.standuptoracism.org.uk  
info@standuptoracism.org.uk  
Twitter: @AntiRacismDay

# Protestors gather to defend Magna Carta

*Continued from page 1*

Matt Foot described the Global Law summit as 'a sham; a sick joke. The only way to celebrate Magna Carta is to get rid of Grayling!'. While Karl Turner described Grayling as having 'a bull in a china shop approach...he isn't incompetent because he hasn't got a law degree, he is just incompetent.'

### Impeached

King John Chris Grayling was then impeached on the basis of his convictions for 'misleading the House of Commons and the people', 'obstruction of justice', abuse of power' and 'abuse of oath of office of the

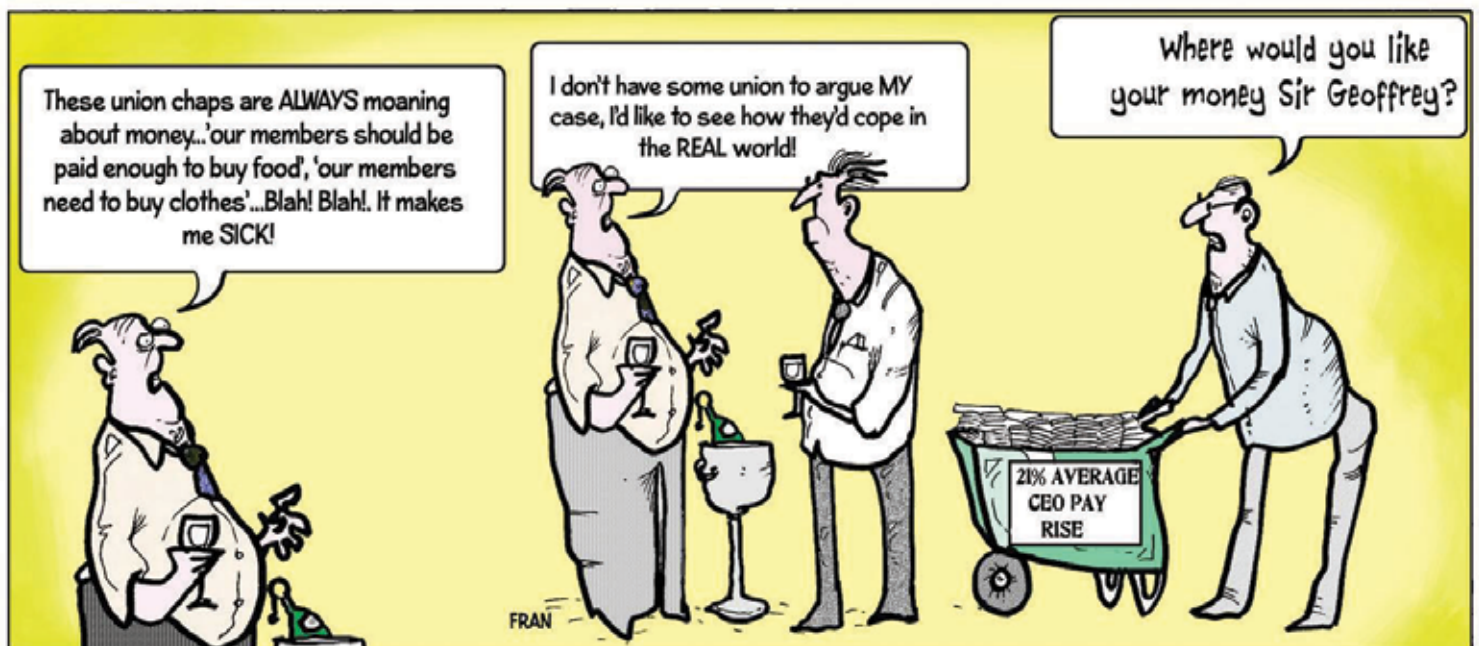
Lord Chancellor'. Needless to say the people found him guilty on all charges!

The rally then marched King John Grayling to the QE2 Conference Centre, where the Summit was being held, to shouts of Grayling, Grayling, Grayling, Out, Out, Out and Magna Carta Not For Sale. On arrival at the centre a copy of Magna Carta and a letter were handed over to the Global Law Summit with a request that Magna Carta be read out to the delegates.

It was a fantastic event with a very strong and serious message. We will not let Grayling hijack Magna Carta for his own ends and we will not let him undermine the basis of our justice system by selling off justice and denying access to justice for all.



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## Ian Lawrence writes



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### Is TR the biggest con trick since 'Salting the Mine'?

The history of the old Wild West is littered with tales of fallen prospectors lured to a remote quarry in search of a rich seam of gold that would make them their fortune. Landowners would develop ingenious scams that would lead the hapless victims to part with their cash as they were suckered into believing what their eyes suggested they should, rather than delving a little deeper into the would be treasure trove.

The principal tactics of the unscrupulous, we are led to believe, included sprinkling a little gold dust in and around an uneconomic mine, or loading it into a shotgun and simply blasting the stuff across the walls. Even cleverer, was the distribution of samples of ore in a few sacks to fool the novice. In one famous case a few uncut diamonds were scattered about to add further temptation to the claim that this was an opportunity just too good to pass up.

After a while people began to see through what came to be known as 'Fools Gold.' The metaphor here is that a number of the TR contractors that we have been meeting to discuss our very real concerns about public safety, IT and staffing are admitting that they don't feel that they were provided with all the facts about the great TR bonanza. Not that I am suggesting that any of our members should have any sympathy with their predicament, but if what we are being told is only half true then the paucity of detailed information made available to these latter day prospectors via the MoJ data room 'goldmine' may mean that their bids for the CRC contract packages have more flaws than we could have imagined.

Examples of where it might all start to go wrong come in the form of panic management initiatives where some CRCs have been asking PSO members to switch duties into the Prison estate to help see 'Through The Gate (TTG)' in by the 1 May operative date because second tier providers cannot deliver. In one well-rehearsed story,

one of the contractors reportedly claimed that they were not aware that hitherto, the Probation Service had not actually had responsibility for the less than 12 month custodial cohort; and another which revealed that the bidder had not factored TTG into their bid. Both reports were later quickly denied at a more senior level

within the companies concerned, but it is becoming clearer by the day that there must be serious doubts about service delivery in the new TR world.

What is an inescapable fact is that some CRC owners have grave misgivings about the case management interface and their plans for dealing with it (either by introducing their own ICT systems to replace OASYS or by commercial collaboration with their contactor rivals). Whatever options are ultimately taken are bound to be complicated by data exchange requirements about what level of information can be shared between Government and outside agencies or contractors.

Even if our members could be convinced that TR was not some kind of latter day 'Klondyke gold rush' they are no fools.

### 'Check off' threat – another attack on union organisation

Among the pernicious tactics employed by this wretched coalition is to say how much they value trade unions and encourage individual membership on the one hand, whilst they plan legislation which is solely designed to weaken our ability to speak out for our members' interests.

Last month, Napo and the other trade unions operating within the MoJ were told of the intention to remove the deduction of union subscriptions by the payroll provider ('check off'). This signalled the start of formal consultation and we were given a number of reasons as to why the MoJ believes it would be beneficial to allow us to take more control of our finances.

The fact is that check off is not paid for by the taxpayer and has been a cornerstone of the basic industrial contract between unions and the state sector for at least four decades. We will of course be making a compelling response which points this out, and also say that if a decision is ultimately made to discontinue this arrangement, then a wholly unrealistic three months notice proves that there is no altruistic

intent behind this whatsoever.

We hope that it may be possible to find common ground; but if not, our plans for a direct debit switchover for our members employed by the MoJ/NOMS will swing into action. Make no mistake, this will present us with a real test; but if all our members and activists stand four square together against what would be yet another attempt to divide us, it's one that I believe that Napo will come through successfully.

### Napo Staffing Review

At the time of my election as your General Secretary in 2013, I indicated that I wanted to be at the forefront of enabling Napo to adapt and change to the challenges ahead. Since then we have seen the restructuring to our branch network and the NEC, the creation of a new approach to the bargaining environment forced upon our NPS and CRC members and an improving partnership relationship between Napo and Cafcass senior management. We have done all this against the backdrop of a TR campaign.

Recently we have reviewed how we can best utilise our Full Time Officials and nationally elected Officers to ensure that we rebuild our engagement strategy with our members as well as their employers, and underpinning this are ongoing reviews of our finance systems, membership services portfolio, our communications strategies and our relationship with the excellent National Representatives Panel.

We have also now formally commenced a consultation process with your staff here at Chivalry Road (and the UNITE union) following the publication of Napo's Staffing Review. This has produced a new operational template for the way in which we will try to deliver services to our members in the future. More details will follow once we have brought the NEC up to speed and answered the initial feedback from staff, but the key features include the creation of some development opportunities which will be open to our Administrator grade, no redundancies or detriment to pay and terms and conditions and a guaranteed role for each of your employees in the proposed new structure which will be based around three core functions of: representing members, professional support and campaigns, and Finance and services to members.

### Ali Bonner

Not part of the staffing review because she is leaving Napo for pastures new, is Alison Bonner who has been with Napo for over 10 years. Ali's colleagues at Chivalry Road, though sad to see her leave, are delighted that she is to start a new role in one of her local NHS Hospital's.

## Speak up for Justice TUC Campaign

The Speak up for Justice Campaign was coordinated by the TUC to bring together the justice unions in partnership with the Justice Alliance. Napo has been involved with the campaign from the start and has, collectively with sister unions, brought attention to the wide range of issues within the justice sector.

We have held fringe meetings at party conferences, commissioned reports from the New Economics Foundation to highlight concerns with privatisation, organised collective meetings with Labour front bench MPs and of course helped to organise events such as the Not the Global Law Summit.

As we head towards the general election the Speak up for Justice Campaign gives all the member unions a bigger voice in an environment when it is becoming increasingly difficult to be heard above the thousands of other campaigns and election demands. More so given that justice is not a main election issue this year for the political parties. Here is an update on some of the key issues.

### PCS campaign

Members in PCS have been in a two year long campaign to fight the privatisation of Fine Enforcements. Despite the department collecting more fines than ever with fewer staff and resources the government seems determined to hand this piece of work over to the private sector. No winning bidder has been announced although BT looks to be the front runner. The government had intended to announce the preferred bidder by late February this is now looking like it will be as late as the end of March, just as we enter purdah. After suffering a round of extensive redundancies PCS members along with FDA members in the CPS are now trying to battle with court closures and the digitalisation of the Court process that has seen little investment on the government's part. We will be working closely with PCS to raise awareness of the increase in Litigants in Person in the Family Courts and the impact this is having on hearings that have now become far less child focused due to a lack of legal representation.

### Prison battles

The POA is continuing its battle regarding staff shortages and the increase of violence in prison both against inmates and staff. It was announced on 21 February that the new Wrexham prison will be publically owned but that 25% of the provision will be outsourced. A small victory for the union with a government that has been relent-

less in trying to outsource virtually everything before the election takes place. While Unison, aside from probation, is fighting significant cuts to non uniformed staff in policing.

### Meeting with Labour Justice Team

As a collective we met with Jenny Chapman earlier in February to raise these issues and



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to seek a commitment from Labour on what they will do if they get into power. Jenny was very candid at the start of the meeting saying that justice is not an election issue and as such the Labour manifesto will be quite broad on justice to avoid being tied down to policy they find they cannot deliver.

With regards to Napo she made it absolutely clear that Labour intend to scrutinise the contracts but that she was already aware that any alterations to the contracts come with a hefty financial pen-

alty which will tie their hands considerably when it comes to delivering their policies. However, she was open to our requests and has agreed that Labour will not only look for potential termination clauses in the contracts but will also review the delivery of probation contracts to see if any providers are failing to meet their contractual requirements.

This could be an opening for us to work with Labour to draw up an alternative to TR and to find ways to implement new policy without a significant financial penalty. Jenny was also clear that Labour are fully committed to upholding our collective bargaining, terms and conditions and improving the PQF so that more staff in both the NPS and the CRCs have access to professional development and training.

The Speak up for Justice Campaign has written to both Conservative and Liberal Democrat ministers but to date neither party has agreed to meet with us.

**Tania Bassett**

## Get ready for a new look Napo News

**Napo News last went under a major revamp in 2007 when we went full colour. This year will see the launch of a completely new format for the union's newsletter. From October 2015 Napo News will be changing into a quarterly magazine.**

We will continue to cover core trade union issues, terms and conditions, negotiations, health and safety, diversity and equality, and campaigning issues; but the larger magazine format will also allow us to cover professional issues in greater depth and the quarterly schedule will mean that national committees can have a greater input, reporting back more fully to members on their work.

Meanwhile, Napo News Online will develop to provide improved news coverage for those members who prefer to access their information online.

We will be looking to see a fresh and vibrant design for the new Napo magazine, and we are running a competition over the coming months for a new title for the publication.

Submit your ideas for the name of the new look Napo News to Kath Falcon [kfalcon@napo.org.uk](mailto:kfalcon@napo.org.uk) – the three best ideas (chosen by the Officers' Group) will go out to vote later in the year.

The overall winner will get an all expenses paid trip to Eastbourne for this year's AGM where the new title will be launched.

## Family Court FoCuS

**This is a very brief article as I have just returned from two and a half weeks of annual leave.**

We remain without an editor for the *Family Court Journal*, which is a great shame. If there is anyone who is even a little interested please make contact to discuss this further. This may be a role which would suit a recently retired member. I stress again that there is support in the role from the Family Court Committee and we already have some potential Editorial Board members just waiting for an Editor.



Work continues on the Family Court Conference, which is shaping up nicely. Do tell non-member colleagues about this event and that they can attend 'for free' if they join Napo by the date of the Conference on 18 June.

Work by the Family Court Committee also continues on the motions passed at Napo AGM.

The definition of the new Advanced Social Worker role for Family Court Advisers has been delayed for further consultation as it is vital that this is thoroughly considered and appropriate. It is hoped that there will be the possibility of a workshop on this topic at the Family Court Professional Conference. It would be good to have members' views on the subject.

The definition and implementation of the Enhanced Practitioner role is more urgent and the hope is that this will be in place by April.

Cafcass is providing us with updated 'smart' phones and has asked us to respond to a questionnaire about our needs with regards to this. I think it will be important that we do so as we need the technology to be as helpful to our task as possible. For example, it would be good if we could open ECMS files on our phones.

I am planning to attend the next Family Court Unions Parliamentary Group on 10 March and will give feedback to you from this in the next *Napo News*.

**Jay Barlow**  
**National Vice Chair Cafcass**

## Rape in Custody

**Available evidence suggests that thousands of incidents of sexual assault may be taking place in prisons in England and Wales each year.**

In 2014 the Commission on Sex in Prisons (an independent commission established by the Howard League) produced a report on coercive sex in prison which found that there has been minimal research on sexual abuse and sex crimes in prison and that the nature and full extent of the problem is not known, with sexual violence in prison often being hidden and underreported. The commission was able to conduct primary research amongst former prisoners but an attempt to interview current prisoners was blocked by the Ministry of Justice. However a survey by HM Inspectorate of Prisons indicates that 1% of prisoners report being sexually abused in prison and detention centres.

Recent figures on suicide rates in custody

have been published showing a 64% rise in self-inflicted deaths behind bars in the past year. It seems highly likely that this alarming increase will be linked to the rate of sexual assault on prisoners and the decrease in numbers of prison staff.

In the United States of America this problem is widely recognised and the Prison Rape Elimination Act was passed with bipartisan support in 2003. In this country it appears that the Justice Secretary has refused to investigate the issue and says 'not on my watch'.

The 2014 AGM debated the issue and a motion was passed condemning the Secretary of State's decision as 'representing an appalling lack of care for vulnerable prisoners'. The resolution was referred to Campaigning Committee which has written to the Labour Front Bench Team about taking the issue forward. A meeting with Sadiq Khan's office is due to take place shortly.

## Family Court Professional Conference 2015 Children, Changes and Family Law Proceedings

Birmingham 18 June

### Venue

Thistle Birmingham City Centre, the Royal Angus, St Chad, Queensway, Birmingham B4 6HY

Registration 9.15 for 10.00 start  
Finishes 16.30

### Speakers

**Sian Griffiths**, Independent Social Worker and Report author on Child Sex Abuse in Rochdale

**District Judge Martin Dancey** (Bournemouth) – speaking on Judicial Conciliation

**Elizabeth Coe**, Chief Executive, National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC)

### Workshops to be confirmed

A registration form will be sent out to FCS members shortly

**For more information contact Jacqui Paryag** [jparyag@napo.org.uk](mailto:jparyag@napo.org.uk)



## Napo Equality Courses 2015

### Disability Course

Thursday 19 March, PCS Birmingham

### Race Equality Course

Tuesday 21 April, PCS Birmingham

### Monitors Training

Thursday 9 July, PCS Leeds

### Public Speaking for Women

Thursday 17 September, PCS Birmingham

**Please contact Shireena Suleman on** [ssuleman@napo.org.uk](mailto:ssuleman@napo.org.uk) **or on 020 7223 4887 for further information or to register for any of the courses.**

## From the Co-Chairs

**It's late February and spring is in the air. That is to say it is almost daylight at the point we leave our respective homes in Yorkshire to travel down to London and the daffodils are clearly evident on the Common near Napo head office.**

Late February also means that the CRCs have now been in the hands of their new owners for about four weeks. Ian Lawrence, General Secretary and one of the Co-Chairs have had further meetings with some of the new providers, which most recently has included EOS and Interserve/Purple Futures. As mentioned in last month's column, these meetings have been about sharing our concerns linked to TR especially around public safety, staffing levels, workload and ICT. It is interesting to note that for a number of them there are shared concerns at a 'strategic level'. However what will need monitoring is how strategic plans etc. are converted into reality at a local CRC level. In addition to these meetings, Napo's National Officials are now also engaging with branches and CRCs to offer support to members in what for Napo is a very new operating environment.

In this period of continuous change, there is one occurring at Napo Office. Alison Bonner, who has been the administrator with responsibility for supporting the NEC and Officers' group, will be leaving Napo in early March for a job working at the Royal Marsden Hospital which is closer to home. Ali has worked for Napo for more than 10 years. On behalf of the current Officers Group and all members we would like to

put on record our collective thanks for all of Ali's hard work for Napo over the years and whilst she will be greatly missed we wish her well for the future.

Another change ahead at least for colleagues working in the NPS in the first instance could be the way in which union subscriptions are collected in the future. It is an area we have been exploring already, taking advice from other unions, our bank etc., however NOMS has just given notice to all the recognised unions within the MoJ/NOMS that it is starting a consultation period in relation to the end of what is called check-off, i.e. the deduction of union subscriptions from salaries. Napo will be putting in submissions to NOMS/MoJ and we



Yvonne Pattison and Chris Winters.

are developing an action plan to deal with this proactively, not only to ensure existing members are in a position to pay their subscriptions by other methods but also use it as an opportunity to recruit non-members.

**Chris Winters and Yvonne Pattison  
National Co-Chairs**

### Ali Bonner says goodbye



**After working for a couple of months as a temp in Membership whilst pregnant with my first daughter Clara, I became permanent in the Membership Department in August 2004. I enjoyed working with Branch Officers and members of Napo during my time in Membership, as well as my colleague James Carpenter who I'm sure a number of you will remember – we made a great team and are still firm friends to this day.**

I then had my second daughter, Evie, in 2007 and returned to Membership after my maternity leave, however due to being diagnosed with Thyroid Cancer in 2009 I took some

long term disability leave over the next couple of years. Upon my return, Chris McGarry, who many members will also remember retired from the post of NEC and Officers' Administrator – I decided it was time for a change and was successful in taking over this role upon Chris's retirement.

I have attended a number of AGMs in my time at Napo which has been interesting and eye opening in so many ways as well as enjoyable and seen many members, and staff, come or go from Napo for a number of reasons.

I have worked for a number of Chairs during my time in my current role and I was lucky enough to start my role with Tim Wilson in the Chair role. Tim was fantastic in helping me get to know my role and assist me in my new position. I also found out that the NEC was not nearly as scary as I had always thought! I want to extend my thanks personally and best wishes to Tim Wilson especially as well as Yvonne Pattison and Chris Winters (current National Co-Chairs).

My last working day will be Friday 6 March 2015 and will start work in the Clinical Trials Department at the Royal Marsden Hospital based in Sutton on Monday 9 March. This is very close to my home and will enable me to improve my worklife balance so I can spend more quality time with my family.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the NEC Reps, members, Branch Officers, Napo Staff and Officers for all the support I received during my diagnosis and treatments for Thyroid Cancer and I wish you all the very best with the campaigning and massive fight you face ahead of you.

Goodbye and Good Luck

**Alison Bonner**



Claiming tax relief on your Napo subscriptions is straight-forward, and easy! To find out how contact the Membership Section at Napo Head Office on [membership@napo.org.uk](mailto:membership@napo.org.uk) for a Napo Tax Pack which includes a model letter to send to HMRC.

# Mr Austerity and his sidekick Starver strike at probation pensions

**At the start of, 'The Incredibles' we're told how Supers were forced into the background after their attempts to help caused mayhem due to a lack of judgement and foresight. Likewise, George Osborne, aka Mr Austerity, is showing a catastrophic lack of foresight that could cost taxpayers for decades to come.**

A startlingly clear example is probation pensions and the new CRCs. The lack of understanding, foresight and control from Mr Austerity and his powerless pensions sidekick Starver (aka Danny Alexander) mean a chaotic mess is emerging from the wreckage of something that didn't need mending.

Pensions are a great post-war success story. Despite Pension Expert's complicated language (used to ensure they never have to retire), pensions are actually pretty simple. The employee defers some of their pay

payers by reducing the demand for top-up benefit payments.

This simple plan has worked pretty well for 70 years. A few tweaks have been needed to accommodate changing working patterns but the model's a good one. As people live longer the need to save for retirement increases and supporting pensions should be even more critical.

## Pension attack

Now enter Mr Austerity and Starver. It's 2010 and they don't believe the public want to pay very much for public services and think there are more votes to be won by telling private sector employees how much worse off they are now, without understanding or mentioning the long-term economic or social costs of more destitute elderly. Their attack is met by unexpected levels of resistance. Literally millions go on strike and 100,000's take to the streets. Forced into a retreat they settle for revised pensions that actually improve the deal for most public servants, albeit with higher contributions and longer to wait to access the pensions.

However, notable exceptions to this, including firefighters and teachers, show Mr Austerity hasn't given up. These Super's just don't know when they're beaten.

They particularly resent the

high employer contributions. They think public servants should earn less than private sector 'wealth generators'... after all their servants don't earn as much as the family upstairs so why should the public's servants be well paid?

Austerity is about teaching people how to get by on less so they can levy less tax. Austerity is for life – not just for Christmas. So it follows that privatising public service will inevitably also, in their logic, be cheaper and certainly less tiresome as someone else can deal with the servants' moaning.

So Mr Austerity and Starver back probation privatisation. Except the private sector won't take it all and the NPS is staying public. Mr Austerity doesn't want them joining the civil service pension scheme which Chancellors have raided constantly instead of investing in so is relatively more expensive for the Treasury. He promises that Probation can stay in the Local Government Pension Scheme (thus creating many



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knock-on problems around HR and shared services that weren't understood and worked through despite union warnings). Pressure from unions sees him saying all CRCs can stay in the LGPS as well as long as their new owners pay the higher contributions.

The new owners are also told, when negotiating their reward for taking on CRC

work, that pay will be negotiated centrally by the NNC. Mr Austerity likes this as he is the Pay Dictator and Lord of the Pay Freeze. But if pensions are deferred pay, say the new owners, shouldn't you be paying us for the pension contributions. If we have to pay all staff the same to ensure movement and co-operation why not pensions?

Mr Austerity chooses to give them the employers' contribution but not to make them keep new staff in the scheme. And the chaos starts... Why should the new owner get to keep part of a new starter's notional deferred pay? Why should the taxpayer put up with that? If CRC newcomers don't have to defer pay into a pension scheme should they earn less than those that do? Or should they earn more to compensate them for not being in a pension? If they take home more now is this creating an incentive for a hard-pressed victim of the Pay Ice Age to opt-out of their pension, taking a chance on having enough for a rainy day? Does this start to look like a government incentivising people to opt out of saving for their retirement? If staff opt out what happens to the employer contribution payments for staff who transferred – can the taxpayer have these back to save up for the higher benefit payments we'll need to pay? Do that and the profit margin goes and companies get angry – so angry they may stop funding Mr Austerity's Party.

Pensions themselves are fairly simple but start messing with them and things get complicated quite quickly. Hopefully Mr Austerity and Starver will be retired soon and whoever gets to clean up their mess will have more respect for public servants, and a better grasp of strategy and long term public interest.

**Dean Rogers**



Has anyone else spotted the resemblance between Danny Alexander and the Incredibles baddy Syndrome?

when they're working and saves it for when they retire. The employer does the same, helping spread their costs. The government encourage this by offering tax breaks which are far cheaper than increased benefit payments for destitute elderly citizens. These pots of deferred pay are invested and grow – themselves becoming important sources of investment. For example, several UK rail franchises are owned by the Dutch public sector pension fund.

In the public sector, governments have more control and influence over pensions as, in one form or another, they are the employer. So for most of the last 70 years governments of all shades tried to lead by example. Public servants had good guaranteed pensions. They tended to earn less when working than comparators in the private sector as more of their pay was deferred but they'd be rewarded for this in retirement by a good pension. This also reduced long term financial risks for tax-

Coming up...

**PSO Conference**

Friday 3 July 2015

Put this date in your diary NOW!



## Women in Napo Profiles – Nicki Kenney

**This issue of *Napo News* profiles Nicki Kenney. Nicki is Co-Chair of the Family Court Section and also the Section rep on the NEC. She has been a member of Napo since 1987.**

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

I joined Napo when I joined Staffordshire Probation Service in 1987. The local Branch then was North Midlands and consisted of Staffordshire and Shropshire members. We had many activists including Chris Lord who went on to become a vice-chair. Chris always encouraged our Branch to respond to green papers and to influence Napo policy. I became a Health & Safety rep in the early 1990s and did the TUC stage 1,2 and 3 training along with many specific Napo training days over the years. When Cafcass formed in 2001, the Family Court Section (FCS) was formed and was active and influential. I joined the Section Executive when we incorporated a Health & Safety Officer on the Executive. Just over three years ago I became Co-Chair of the Section, sharing the role with Steve Hornby who is based in Manchester. I am the FCS rep on the Napo

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



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National Executive Committee. This was an excellent introduction to the detailed workings of Napo. I am also the FCS Edridge Fund Rep. Having been a Trustee of the fund, I know how very much needed and valued the support of reps is for staff facing difficult times.

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

I work in Cafcass where women make up

the majority across all grades. However, it can sometimes feel a male-dominated world and it is important that women are seen to be actively involved and promoting women's issues.

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

In the '80s, Helen Schofield inspired me. She did an incredible amount of work for Napo at an unbelievable pace. Anne Ashworth who worked in Family Court Welfare in Lancashire was a calm but powerful advocate for professional issues in Family Court work on the Family Court Committee. Locally, many women members are personally supportive of me, notably many women team members at Stafford and Ruth Fields in West Midlands.

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

The impact of work on general health is a serious issue for our members. With increasingly sophisticated technology, it can be difficult to switch off or to take time back.

### **What does FCS do to encourage women members to become active in Napo?**

The Family Court Section posts are held by an equal mix of women and men. By far the best way of involving new members is by a personal approach. Napo's organisation can seem complicated at times but it is transparent. The best

**If you are interested in taking part in the Women in Napo profile please contact Katie Lomas or Sarah Friday ([klomas@napo.org.uk](mailto:klomas@napo.org.uk) or [sfriday@napo.org.uk](mailto:sfriday@napo.org.uk))**

## Women in Napo Conference 2015

**It's almost two years since the last Women in Napo conference in 2013 which marked 30 years of Women in Napo. That conference was a proud celebration of the achievements of the strategy to make our union a more inclusive place and ensure that women's activism is promoted. We also looked to the future and one of the workshops focussed on building confidence around campaigning publicly against the attack on Probation through TR.**

As I write this our worst fears have been realised, TR has created a split in Probation and brought chaos, pain and distress to many of us. The Family Court Section has also been forced to battle for the rights of their workers but we are still here. This needs saying.

We could not, against the might of the Government, stop the reckless split in Probation but we are still here and still fighting for our rights. It would be easy to focus only on the dramatic attacks on our professions and our rights as trade union-

ists and workers but we also need to carry on the focus on equality and diversity that makes us so different as an organisation.

So the Women in Napo conference will go ahead this year, with a smaller budget, doing more for less (does that sound familiar?). The conference will be in the historic city of York on 12 June, registration forms and information will come out to branches in March. Please save the date for now!

This year's conference aims to cover a range of topics around women's activism and feminism and will also include a professional theme. I will be writing a series of articles for *Napo News* to let you know more about the contents as we get confirmation of them. We have a fantastic planning group working hard to make sure that this conference is interesting and inspiring. The conference is open to all women members of Napo, please get in touch if you want to know more about it.

**Katie Lomas**  
**National Vice Chair**

## Fit for Work

**All Napo members need to be aware of a new Government service 'Fit for Work' which involves a voluntary referral for anyone who is sick from work through illness or injury for over four weeks.**

The scheme is currently being piloted in the Sheffield area, but it will soon be rolled out nationwide. The main points to note of the scheme are that:

- GPs or employers can refer people to the new occupational health service
- It is voluntary – people can refuse to be referred. If members experience problems with this they should contact their branch/Section/local representative.
- Even if the individual initially agrees to

take part they can pull out at a later stage

- The referral will lead to an assessment – usually over the phone in the first instance
- a return to work plan will then be developed that may contain recommendations for the individual, the employer or the GP. It will be discussed with the individual and if they agree it will be sent to the GP and employer.

- A useful TUC guide to Fit for Work can be found at <http://www.tuc.org.uk/Fit%20for%20work%20guidea>

Cafcass, NPS and CRC employers have their own occupational health service, so members shouldn't need to use the Governments Fit for Work service. These employers' occupational health services will have a better knowledge of the workplace and close links with the employer. Sometimes we are disappointed by decisions of occupational health, but even taking this into considera-

tion it is still the case that the occupational health service provided by the employers with whom we deal will be better than the service on offer from the Government - as they provide a greater range of services and can provide important information on the health of the workforce and possible problems.

The trade union movement has reservations about Fit for Work – particularly if the service is used to force people back to work before they are well enough. There are also concerns that some employers will not recognise the voluntary nature of the scheme, and that the employer is not obliged to implement issues in their return to work plan. However the service will offer support for many workers who are currently denied help of any kind.

**Sarah Friday**

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

### Photo of the Month

'Sodexo get everywhere'. This photo from Tim Wilson (Northumbria Branch) was taken in Istanbul.

**Send your unusual photos in to [editorial@napo.org.uk](mailto:editorial@napo.org.uk)**



### Napo events and training Coming up...

#### Disability Course

Thursday 19 March,  
PCS Birmingham

#### Race Equality Course

Tuesday 21 April,  
PCS Birmingham

#### WIN Conference

Friday 12 June, York

#### Family Court Conference

Thursday 18 June, Birmingham

#### PSO Conference

Friday 3 July. Venue TBC

#### Monitors Training

Thursday 9 July, PCS Leeds

#### Public Speaking for Women

Thursday 17 September,  
PCS Birmingham

#### AGM

Thursday 15 – Saturday 17 October,  
Eastbourne

## Newcastle 2,000, Pegida 200

**Over 2,000 protesters, including Napo members, demonstrated last month against the first rally in Britain by a group opposed to what it calls the 'Islamisation of Europe'. They gathered to oppose the UK branch of German group Pegida which congregated at Newcastle's Bigg Market. The demonstrators marched to Newgate Street, within sight of a couple of hundred Pegida UK demonstrators.**

Leader of the counter-protest organisers, Newcastle Unites, Dipu Ahad said Pegida UK's agenda was 'to promote hatred' and that the choice of Newcastle for Pegida UK's first rally was 'bizarre'. 'Newcastle has not had an issue with extremism. Newcastle is not Islamified. So why come to Newcastle and break our communities?'

Newcastle Central MP Chi Onwurah, who spoke at the counter protest, said: 'what we would have liked is for Pegida to have not picked our great city to march in in the

first place; but to see people of all cultures and backgrounds, from across the political spectrum and including many football fans, turn out really showed that Newcastle is united against these outsiders is uplifting'.

Official figures from Northumbria Police

suggested 2,000 people had turned out for the Newcastle Unites counter protest, which marched from the gates of the city's Chinatown, down Gallowgate before rallying before a stage on Newgate Street.

**Megan Elliott**

**Northumbria Branch**



## Edridge update: 50/50 Club membership rises

In January Napo did a mail out to all members, and included with the papers an application form for our 50/50 Club. The response has been fantastic, with new members joining, and some existing members buying an extra number. We are still collating the new forms, but there may be an increase in the amount of the monthly prize as a result. Details of the next winner will be published on our website.

A reminder to members who may have missed this, the 50/50 Club is a small lottery, where members purchase a number costing £12 for a year. Every month the numbers are drawn, and the winning number gets a prize. The prize gets big-



ger when there are more members, and in the past has been around £100 per month, though a recent prize was for £111. About 50% of the proceeds goes towards our work in assisting colleagues in need.

### We need more monthly donations!

We have asked in previous issues if members would consider sending us small monthly donations, as if enough people do this we could have a more secure income. Please do consider doing this. If you email office@edridgefund.org we will send you details of how to set this up, or you can visit our website, where there is a 'Donations' page which will tell you the best way to do this.

### Applications for assistance

We have been receiving a steady stream of applications for help, and the need for help is not going away. Most applications are dealt with in a matter of a few days, and in emergencies we can process applications very quickly.

Follow us on twitter @edridgefund

**The Trustees & Staff of the Edridge Fund of Napo.**

## Letter

Dear Editor

In a previous issue, Sarah Friday (Napo National Health & Safety Official) highlighted the danger posed by TTIP.

I have not seen much about this in the National press, and doubt if many people are aware of it or the potential threat to commercial and social freedoms. It seems it is the latest follow-on to GATS the General Agreement of Trade in Services which, during the 1990s, was the vehicle by which the US and WTO tried to force Britain into accepting GM – Genetically Modified foods. Whatever ones views on that, TTIP looks to be a very real threat to every walk of life from raising standards for the poorest in society, to ensuring that small businesses are allowed to offer a service to public organisations. In respect of the latter it means, for example, ensuring that local trades people can be contracted to do so, instead of having a large Mitie type organisation travelling from miles away just to change a lightbulb.

If TTIP is imposed, the success last year of residents of the New Era Estate in east London in preventing millionaire property developers Westbrook Partners' plan to sell tenants homes to a billionaire US investor, thus resulting in exorbitant rent rises and potential tenant evictions, would be made impossible to resist.

Forget the bankers bonuses, the latest celebrity scandals, and even for the time being, Climate Change, I feel that the subject of TTIP needs to be on every Probation meeting agenda and opposition has to be total. If it isn't already being done, we need to lobby our MPs to find out who is 'for' and who is 'against'.

I hope that Napo can continue to keep us informed about the progress of TTIP in international negotiations, as Sarah Friday's information suggests that the urgency of resisting this development cannot be underestimated – this is an 'invasion' threat like no other.

**Suzanne McCarthy**  
**PO (retired)**

## Frank Martin



**Frank Martin, Senior Probation Officer and longstanding Napo and Napsac member died peacefully in early January this year, aged 82. Sadly, Frank had suffered with dementia for some years and been cared for full-time since 2009. Many friends and former colleagues joined his family at a full, well-attended farewell service in Guildford on 12 January.**

Frank joined the Probation Service in 1963 after a year's training, having spent many years in jobs as varied as cake-making and precision engineering; along with his obligatory period of National Service. He had been born in Lincolnshire, but after an unsettled childhood was sent, aged just 8, to live in Yorkshire, which became his adopted home and his long-term love.

His early Probation years were spent in Skipton and Keighley before he moved south to Croydon and Surrey in the mid-1960s, serving as a PO and later as an SPO

in Redhill and Caterham. He undertook a placement as Probation Manager in Send Prison and after retirement he continued as a peripatetic worker until 2002, aged 70. Frank will be remembered as a singular and committed Probation worker, ever willing to stand his ground and fight his corner, using some of the insight derived from his early-life privations in his work with offenders.

Frank's working life was leavened with a life-long passion for the outdoors and fell-walking; his friends recall his encyclopaedic knowledge of birds and wildlife. He and his second wife bought a holiday home near Skipton, in his beloved Yorkshire, in the early 1990s, which allowed these twin interests full rein.

For Probation colleagues Frank's role as the first Chairman of Napsac will be long remembered. He it was who was first, at the 1976 Napo conference, to respond to (Lord) John Hunt's call for Napo members willing to undertake a sponsored walking event in aid of the Edridge Fund. Such was the spirit generated during that first 'Snowdon 14 peaks' event that Napsac was born and Frank steered it for the first 16 of its (current) 39 years. Many Napsac-ers speak with great fondness of this very knowledgeable, amiable man with his broad smile; and attribute a considerable debt of gratitude, feeling inspired by his physical vigour and the enthusiasm he generated, especially in those new to the fells.

Napsac members, along with his widow, Anna, will mark his Probation and fell-walking life at their meet in Borrowdale in May this year.

**Peter Holden**  
**NAPSAC**

# AGM 2015

**15-17 October**  
**Devonshire Park Centre, Eastbourne**

**Registrations open online on 1 June**

## Formal Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 103rd Annual General Meeting of Napo is to be held on 15, 16 and 17 October 2015, commencing at 2.00pm at the Devonshire Park centre, Eastbourne.

All members of Napo may attend the Annual General Meeting and registration forms will be distributed during June. A detailed programme and agenda, together

with relevant documents, will be sent to all members who return the completed registration form or register online.

Motions to be considered by the AGM may be submitted by the NEC, a national committee, a Probation branch, the Family Court Section, the PSO Forum or any two full or professional associate members of Napo. Constitutional amendments may be submitted only by the NEC this year.


Motions and constitutional amendments should be submitted on the form provided which is available from Annoesjka Valent at the Napo office at (avalent@napo.org.uk). Motions and constitutional amend-

ments must reach the General Secretary no later than 12 noon on Thursday 20 August.

Amendments to motions and amendments to constitutional amendments must reach the General Secretary by 12 noon on Thursday 1 October. Details of motions and constitutional amendments received will be circulated to members at the end of August.

The Annual General Meeting is Napo's supreme policy-making body and all members are urged to attend.

**Ian Lawrence**  
**General Secretary**



*I'm with*  
 Probation | Family Courts  
**napo**