

NQ5

Napo Quarterly

March 2017

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napo

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NQ

The theme for this edition of NQ is International Women's Day.

On 8 March, Napo members across the country helped raise awareness of an important issue affecting a large number of our members. NPS has yet to sign off the maternity leave policy that has left those in the NPS with a far less preferential entitlement to their civil service colleagues. Members and staff posed with the #MaternityRightsMatter slogan as part of the campaign to put pressure on the NPS to get this policy signed off and to set a benchmark for other probation employers to follow.

For our guest feature, NQ speaks to Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah, co-founder of UK Black Pride. Phyllis talks to NQ about overcoming obstacles and the need for solidarity in uncertain times.

Women in Custody sees Chris Winters, Napo co-chair, and two anonymous women members share their experience of working on the inside.

Following on from a motion past at last year's AGM, we speak to Ikky Bhogal about one of the biggest taboos in the workplace: the menopause.

We also hear from Jay Barlow about the Government's plans to drop Clause 32 from the Children's and Social Work Bill. Ian Lawrence writes: *Where next for collective bargaining*. There are also great contributions from Edridge, Probation Journal, staff networks and members who share anecdotal evidence of the impact of high workloads.

Ian Lawrence writes

Where next for Collective Bargaining?

The changes to Napo's operational priorities compared with the industrial world we inhabited before Transforming Rehabilitation has been as massive as we predicted and much more besides.

Moving from three National Bargaining areas (The Probation Association, Cafcass and the Probation Board of Northern Ireland) to 24 employers has tested our resilience and our finances, and has also posed major challenges for our own hard pressed representatives wherever they work.

Add to this the general squeeze on facilities time, the inconsistent approach to workload relief, the cynical attack on our finances by way of the cessation of check off, and the fact that many of our longstanding activists were among those who no longer saw any future in a divided service, we have all had a bit of a rough time to say the least.

Doing the right thing for members

Faced with what Napo has gone through, many unions would have pressed the panic button and run for the exit marked merger; but Napo aren't just any other union or professional association.

Among other things, the disastrous TR experience has all but destroyed the previously longstanding and generally very effective bargaining arrangements that had been established with employers.

Privatisation, as I have mentioned many times before, is as much about removing the confidence of the workforce that their views will make a difference to the employers' strategy, as it is about securing profit. All too often this strategy is successful from the employers' view as the ability of trade unions to mount traditional responses (direct industrial action) becomes increasingly difficult.

This is one of those unpalatable facts of life that leaves those of us (me especially) who have considerable experience of running successful strike ballots and helping members to deliver action in a frustrated state of mind, but it does not signify any acceptance that our cause is lost.

That's why we have made it clear that following the recent indicative ballot, that where circumstance and/or the wishes of members dictate, we will organise similar exercises of formal processes in response to unscrupulous employers.

Napo has a reputation for trying to do the right thing for members and that means first and foremost, ensuring that we are at the negotiating table at all levels for all of our members; protecting and promoting their interests and fulfilling that essential contract which is an expectation when members sign up to pay over their hard earned subscriptions.

Where next?

In probation, the demise of the established national negotiating machinery (the NNC) since last year's Napo AGM decision was taken to defend collective bargaining, has caused understandable anxiety and some internal debate about the most appropriate strategy going forward.

The consensus view of the Napo Officer Group was that we should indicate our willingness to develop employer specific bargaining arrangements whilst making it absolutely clear that the policies contained in the final version of the NNC handbook at 21st May 2014 and the National Staff Transfer and Protections Agreement remain as our 'line in the sand' and that the collective employer specific agreements whether they be with the NPS, Probation Board of Northern Ireland or Pan-CRC will only be acceptable provided that they recognise Napo's national standards on Pay and Workloads. This objective has been the driver for the launch of our two corresponding campaigns.

Difficult, uncertain and challenging times require Napo to respond as effectively and intelligently as we can to the many needs of our members. It means putting the appropriate training in to meet the needs of Napo staff and local Napo reps, and it means building confidence back at grass roots level, that this union can and will make a difference to the working lives of our members.

As I have also said many times before, I cannot deliver that on my own, but working collectively with common purpose and resolve, we can send a powerful signal to all employers that Napo is here and here to stay.



© Stefano Cignoni

News round-up

Campaigning: New Year – New Committee

January saw Napo's campaigning committee meet for the first time this year at HQ's brand new offices.

Two new members – Terry Wilson (elected chair) and Tina Williams (link officer) – now sit alongside existing committee members Guy Tilbury; Jill Narin (vice chair) and Tania Basset (link official) to deliver on the motions passed at 2016's AGM.

Like most of Napo's committees, campaigning has felt the pressure of limited financial resources and time available to carry out union activities. Social media and secure messaging services will be used to allow committee members to communicate more effectively with each other and the wider Napo membership.

In the meantime, hard work has already begun on carrying out conference's instructions which include: TR not Working, Workloads and Support for a TR reversal campaign.

There are still vacancies on the committee and members are encouraged to join. The campaigning committee is the place to be if you want to fight for your profession, your rights and your jobs. Contact tburke@napo.org.uk if you would like to get involved.



NAPSAC

NAPSAC is a wonderful opportunity for people to get together. You don't have to be a hardened or experienced walker. In fact you don't have to be a walker at all; but I defy anyone to be in the lovely locations we visit and not want to do some sort of walking even if it is an amble around local places of interest and other locations.



© Doug Sim

The groups cater for all levels, even those who don't want to walk at all but just be away from home and enjoy the British countryside among family, friends and new acquaintances.

Group members decide what they want to do from the walks planned by members of the group. This can be a walk around a lake, a low level walk, a moderate walk with some ascent, or a high level walk with steep ascent and distance. It could even be no walk at all as stated before. We stay in youth hostels and are provided with breakfast, packed lunches and a three course evening meal, during which many participate in the odd glass of wine or beer and talk about their days' adventures.

If this sounds like something you would like to try please contact:

Caroline Coggin

Tel: 01257 224201

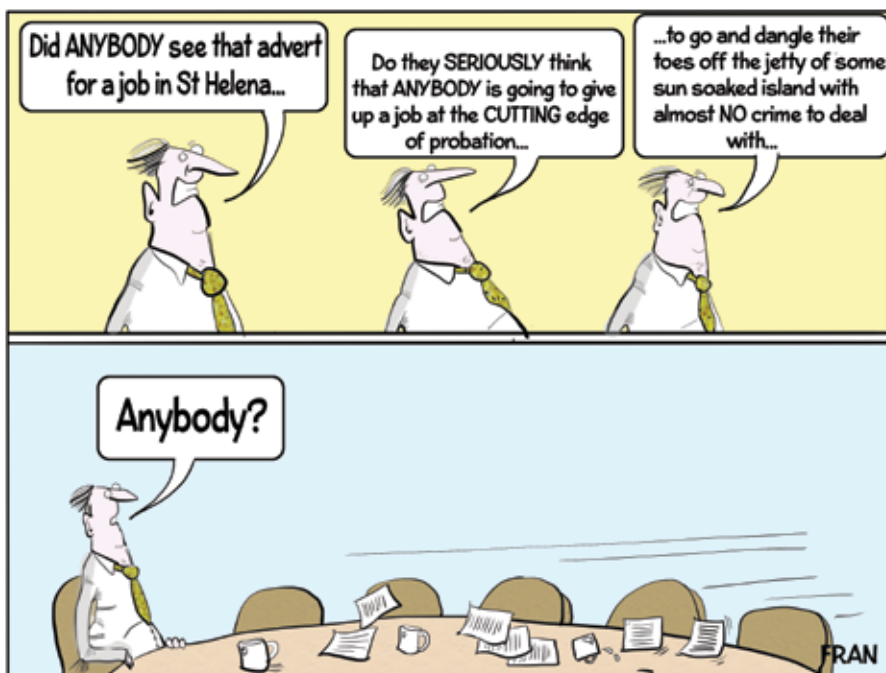
(Chorley Probation Office)

01772 601188/07712 573600

Email: caroline.coggin@yahoo.co.uk or

caroline.bewley@probation.gsi.gov.uk

CAROLINE COGGIN (BEWLEY) – NAPSAC CHAIR



Formal Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 105th Annual General Meeting of Napo is to be held on Friday 13 and Saturday 14 October 2017, commencing at 9.30am at East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham.

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.

Motions to be considered by the AGM may be submitted by the NEC, a national committee, a Probation branch, the Family Court Section, the 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 amendments must reach the General Secretary no later than 12 noon on Friday 18 August.

Amendments to motions and amendments to constitutional amendments must reach the General Secretary by 12 noon on Friday 29 September. 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



The numbers: women, trade unions and the justice system



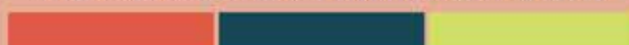
70%
OF NAPO MEMBERS
ARE WOMEN

56%
OF BRANCH ROLES
ARE HELD BY
WOMEN



27%
OF THE FEMALE
WORKFORCE ARE IN
A UNION
COMPARED TO JUST
21% OF MEN

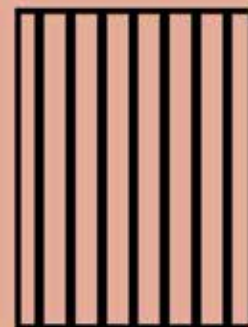
TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP 2015: STATISTICAL BULLETIN GOV.UK



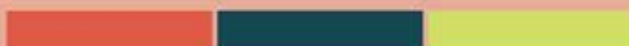
13,500
WOMEN SENT TO
PRISON EACH YEAR.

IN 2014 WOMEN
ACCOUNTED FOR
**5% OF THE PRISON
POPULATION**

18.5%
RE-OFFENDING RATE
COMPARED TO 27.7%
OF MALES



16%
UNDER
SUPERVISION
IN THE
COMMUNITY IN
2013



72%
OF STAFF IN THE
PROBATION
SERVICE ARE
WOMEN

STATISTICS ON WOMEN AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE
SYSTEM 2013 GOV.UK



policecu.co.uk

Probation | Family Courts
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When I spoke at Napo AGM last year I was struck by how many people came up to me and said how Edridge had helped them when they faced challenges that seemed overwhelming. I offered to publicise the work of Edridge more widely, given that support from colleagues is needed now more than ever. So here goes with the first of my quarterly roundups!

Trustee Vacancy:

We need a Board Secretary for the Fund. Visit www.edridgefund.org for details. We can't continue without one.

Fundraising news:

Recent great efforts include a London Branch quiz night where over £500 was raised – clearly a very brainy lot! Thames Valley Branch also held a cake sale.

Members of the Four Shires Branch are planning to slide down the longest slide in Europe at the Olympic Park. Please contact the Edridge Office if you'd like to join up with the Four Shires Branch when they do it and make it a

mass Edridge event.

Let us know if your Branch has any ideas for fundraising events – we can support you with sponsor forms, t-shirts and the JustGiving details to allow you to collect online.

Talking of which, we are taking forward plans to have an Edridge special week of fundraising in June/July of this year when we will try to co-ordinate activity between branches with different events all on the same day. I'll keep you posted.

Donations always welcome:

There are many different ways you can support the Edridge Fund apart from organising fundraising events. The most popular ways of donating are:

- **The 50/50 lottery:** costs just £12 per year and you could win up to £120 each month.
- **Payroll giving:** if you work for the NPS or CAF/CASS. Some CRCs offer this too. Contact me for details.
- **Regular standing order:** just fill in your details on the Edridge website

www.edridgefund.org

- **JustGiving:** one off gifts, see the website. We have recently received £500 from an anonymous retired Napo member which was really encouraging for us.

Help we've given to applicants recently:

Edridge applications come in all shapes and sizes, for all sort of challenges including:

- £350 for a new boiler to a lone parent PSO
- £300 to help with counselling for someone with breast cancer
- £400 to a PO on sick leave who was moving onto nil pay whilst an application for early retirement dragged on.

Please consider applying if you are in hardship and think we could help out, or mention us to a colleague who is in difficulty. Details on the website or from your Edridge Rep.

CHARLOTTE DUNKLEY

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Charlotte.dunkley@probation.gsi.gov.uk

Dave's 10K Challenge 11 June 2017



I'm running the Two Castles 10k to raise money for The Edridge Fund.

Many Probation and Cafcass staff spend their working lives dealing with other people's problems but don't always know where to turn when things get difficult for themselves.

The Edridge Fund provides money, support and help when needed most. The fund gives approximately £30,000 – £40,000 a year in grants. Fundraising is constantly required to effectively meet the demand.



Please help support the valuable work that Edridge do.

I'm hoping to raise **£500** to help colleagues in need.

You can donate at my just giving web page <https://justgiving.com/Dave-Adams10>.

Visit www.edridgefund.org if you would like more details about the Edridge Fund

The Edridge Fund
160 Falcon Road, London SW11 2NY
Telephone/Fax: 020 3397 7025
office@edridgefund.org



Family Court Focus

Napo to propose domestic violence motion at GFTU conference

Napo will be urging the GFTU to support research into the treatment of victims of domestic violence in family courts.

The motion – which will be put to the GFTU's General Council Meeting in May – was developed in response to calls for an emergency review of the family court system after the concerns of practitioners were publicised in the media.

Current practices including refusing legal aid unless abuse can be proved; victims having to represent themselves at fact hearings and being cross-examined by the perpetrator (illegal in criminal courts) have all come under scrutiny.

Napo hopes that the continued pressure this motion will cause will lead to an overhaul of the system.

Domestic violence victims in the Family Court System

This BCGM welcomes the announcement of an emergency review of the Family Court system on the need to afford greater protection to the victims of Domestic Violence and the prevention of the situation where perpetrators may cross examine their victims at hearings. This practice serves only to re-victimise and passes



Jay Barlow

the power to perpetrators in a system which is there to protect victims. This anomaly is already prohibited in the Criminal Courts.

This BCGM instructs the Executive Committee to:

- commission support and research from our associated academics on this important issue.
- seek input by way of a survey of Napo members working in CAFCASS
- seek an urgent approach from the legal professions and Women's Aid with a view to assisting the GFTU in aiming to influence the outcomes of the review through Parliament.

The Government is to withdraw Clause 32 of the Children and Social Work Bill

The Government is set to withdraw Clause 32 of the Children & Social Work Bill at the next reading on 7 March. This was originally clause 29 and was the subject of an emergency motion to Napo members at AGM in Cardiff last October.

The clause would have allowed Local Authorities to request exemptions from their statutory duties in children's social care. Six years was the maximum duration of exemptions which would have included every Act of

Parliament concerned with children's social care from 1933 onwards with no Green or White papers for consultation!

Lord Low and Lord Watson echoed the AGM motion in pointing out that it would have simply paved the way for the privatisation of children's services and dismantling of the state. This would have been a travesty for the most vulnerable children in society. There was absolutely no evidence that it would have led to better services for children and no evidence to suggest general dissatisfaction with existing primary legislation. There was no evidence of support for the clause amongst the many agencies and services involved in providing services to children which would have resulted in a postcode lottery system for children in need. The Government was challenged by David Lammy MP to show what research had been considered in making the proposal. The answer provided by Edward Timpson on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education evaded the crucial question by suggesting in the vaguest terms that academic sources provide information about international innovations and system reform.

Following the AGM, Napo affiliated to the "Together for Children" Campaign (52 organisations) and Napo members added their names to a petition of in excess of 106,000 signatures of professionals opposing the clause and lobbying their MPs.

Save the date

The Family Court Professional Conference will take place Thursday 15 June at Yarnfield Conference Centre in Stone, Staffordshire.

This year's theme will be around radicalisation and child exploitation. Details about speakers, workshops and how to register will follow shortly, but please contact jparyag@napo.org.uk with any immediate enquiries.



The impact of workload pressures on practice

Probation staff have repeatedly raised concerns on the impact of increasing workloads on the services they deliver since TR was introduced. Feeling under pressure to cut corners and to meet unrealistic targets, those in the CRCs and NPS worry they are failing service users – and ultimately the public – in achieving rehabilitative and reduced reoffending objectives.

Napo's 3 Cs Campaign will **CONFRONT** the issue of high workloads, **CHALLENGE** our employers to address them and **CHAMPION** our professional standards!

We have asked branches to gather statistical information from employers so we can accurately assess the pressures staff are facing. Anecdotal evidence and official data already reveal unsafe practices, ineffective delivery of services and a concerning impact on staff health and wellbeing as a result of workload pressures.

What Can Napo Do?

The 3 Cs Campaign will highlight the impact of excessive workloads on our ability to deliver constructive and effective work with service users; its effects on our professionalism; the risk to public safety; how it damages staff health and wellbeing and its cost to the employer due to high rates of staff illness.

We are also demanding the implementation of an effective workload management tool for those working in the probation service and the need for managers to be trained on how to support frontline staff.

We want our employers to formally acknowledge their duty of care to staff and carry out workload and stress audits regularly and act on the findings. Workloads should be a standing item on every JCC and JNCC Agenda and local Workload Committees established.

Probation Operating Models should be regularly audited to ensure they are fully resourced and properly staffed.

What Can You Do?

- Branches will receive demand cards very soon linked to the 3Cs. Take one, carry it and promote it.
- Branches will be undertaking local surveys on the impact of workloads on staff. Respond, contribute and get involved.
- If you feel under pressure, report it. Tell your manager, ask for a stress risk assessment, complete a Hazard Report, and contact your local Napo Rep.

- If you and your colleagues feel team pressures are excessive, report it. Tell your manager, ask for a team risk assessment, and contact your local Napo Rep.

TINA WILLIAMS

NATIONAL VICE CHAIR

Members share their stories of how their work has been affected since TR

One CRC member says pressure not to breach service users who do not comply with Community Orders has made it difficult to supervise an individual who has committed a domestic violent assault: *"He never comes in but he phones, I was told that counts as contact so I shouldn't breach him. What can I do in a 3 minute phone call to get him to change his behaviour?"*

Similar concerns have been raised by another CRC member who highlights the problem with unachievable targets: *"It's all linked to targets but if they all did come in I'd be here until midnight..."*

The impact on our professionalism is damaging. An NPS member notes: *"I can't do the job I was trained to do, I know I should spend longer with my offenders but I don't have the time."*

Similarly, an NPS Court staff member speaking about report preparation stated that: *"I trained to do 2 two hour interviews with a domestic abuse perpetrator to really get into the offence analysis, I get a half hour slot to speak with them now."*

Changes in practice, pressure to meet unrealistic targets and increasing concerns about our professionalism leave staff in unmanageable situations, open to allegations of poor practice, affect health and ultimately impact on public safety.

A CRC member of staff reported frequently *"breaking down in tears"* at her desk and *"hating every minute at work"*. We await data on workload stress records and anticipate corresponding evidence for the feedback we are receiving on workloads.

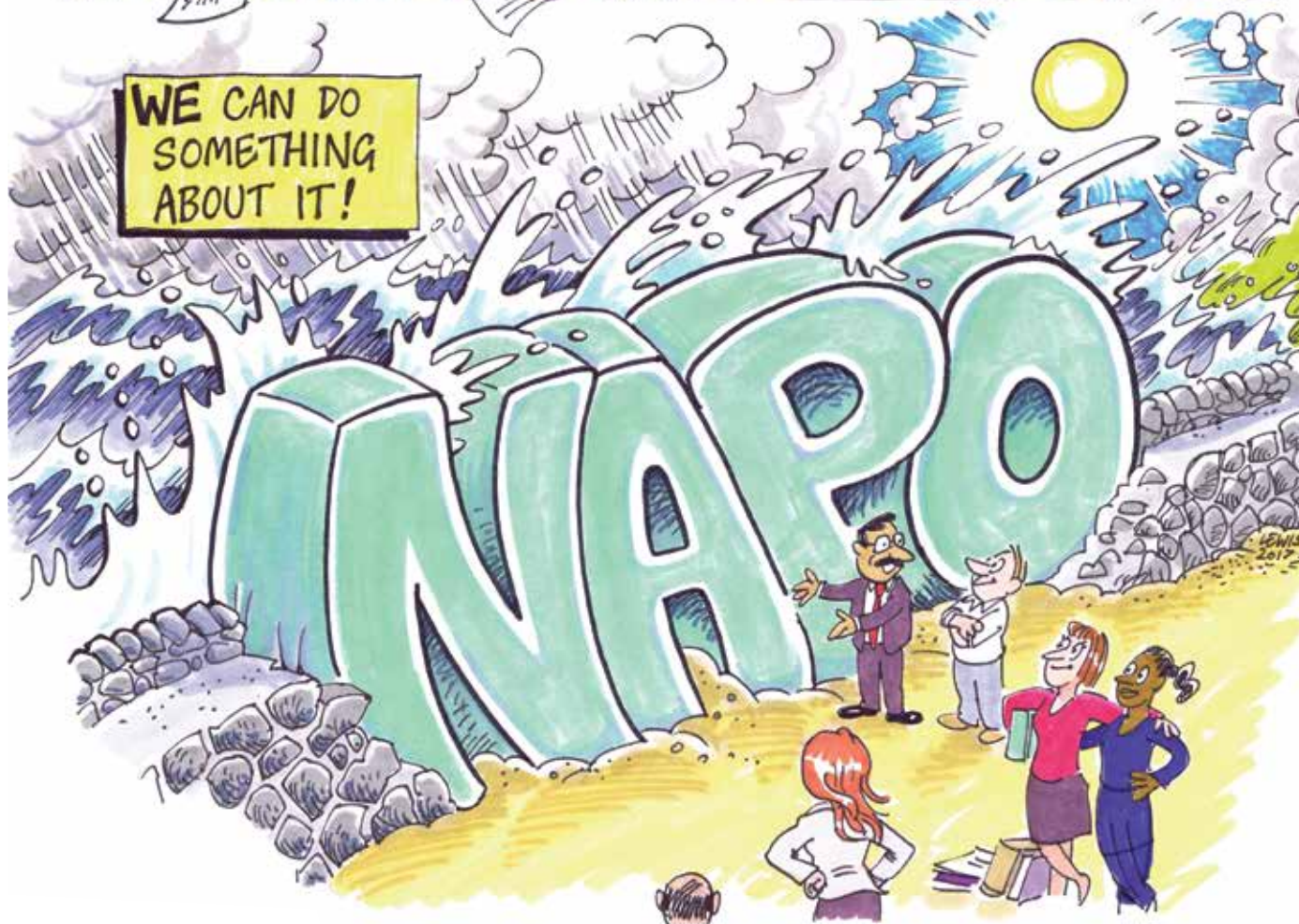
**ALONE, HIGH WORKLOADS
CAN BE OVERWHELMING...**



BUT-TOGETHER WITH NAPO...



**WE CAN DO
SOMETHING
ABOUT IT!**



Women in custody

The UK prison estate is becoming increasingly volatile. Suicides, drug use and violence are soaring while staff numbers, resources and morale have nosedived.

With government plans for more probation staff to be based in prisons, we speak to three women members about what it's really like working on the inside.

Chris Winters

Chris Winters – Napo co-chair – is one of the 123 women members working in a prison.

For 10 of her 27 years in the probation service; the clanking of gates, jangling of keys and the air teeming with testosterone is something she has become accustomed to.

"It's not for everyone," she admits, but says: "I love it. There's a real sense of family, and just like any family, it has its good and bad points. But overall it can be really supportive."

Chris is currently based in an all-female probation team in HMP Humber and says: "I think I would probably struggle more being the only woman probation officer in a male team than being a woman probation officer in a male prison."

When Chris did her first five-year stint in a prison almost 15 years ago the culture was very different. "There would be sexually explicit material on the walls and assumptions about women and their availability made by other male prison staff," she explains.

Things have come on a long way since all those years ago, but Chris still warns: "I think as a woman probation officer you have to be fairly thick-skinned about it and choose the battles you fight. There are battles you stand your ground on in terms of how you are being treated, but you don't always have the energy to fight every single battle so you pick the big ones," she says.

Media and HMI prisons reports have revealed the unpredictable environment prison staff are currently working in, raising concerns for the safety of staff – particularly for women who might be based in them.

Despite this there is no training specifically tailored for women. "We get the same training – as much or as little – as any other member of staff," Chris confirms adding: "It took me four years to get break away training, and this only happened because there was an incident with a teacher being taken hostage."

Women probation officers are instead expected to rely on their experience, which may not always be adequate – especially since some newly qualified staff are placed straight into prisons.

Chris notes that some of the risks faced by female staff could be down a lack of systems being in place.

"I think one of the problems in my prison is the way cases

are allocated. We have clients marked as being a risk to women being given to female staff, and that is not really thought about until someone picks it up and challenges it. That's because allocation is done by junior clerical staff and not by managers," she says.

Although there may be some perceived physical weaknesses women may have working prisons, there are some strengths that make them suited for working with male inmates.

"I think as women we bring a lack of testosterone to an environment which is already full of testosterone," Chris points out. "This can be useful for breaking people bad news or letting them know the outcome of a parole board hearing."

With over 70% of staff working in the probation service being women, plans for more probation staff working in custody will overwhelmingly affect women.

Chris points out that most prisons are based in rural areas making it difficult for women with childcare responsibilities.

"My advice to people considering working in a prison: it's not for all probation staff particularly some women.

"Try and arrange some time in one and see if it feels right because it's that instinctive. If you walk in and feel like you can't cope with the catcalls, the noise and the gates, it's probably not for you."

Amanda*

"When you walk through the gate in the morning, it can feel like stepping into a different world. You leave your phone at the gate and take on your prison self," says Amanda.

After doing a placement in a prison a few years ago as part of her PQF, Amanda made it her first choice when she qualified as a probation officer.

"Friends and family are shocked when I tell them I work in a prison. There appears to be a general view that prison work is masculine or male orientated. I personally feel that this just gives me more reason to work here and strive to do positive work with the people I supervise," she says.

"I work in a Cat B local and remand, so we are very limited as to what we can do with our cases. We do not have any accredited programmes and often don't have an office where you can work with someone. You certainly learn to adapt and think on your feet very quickly," explains Amanda.

Attitudes that condone domestic violence are apparently more prevalent in custody. "Being a woman in a male prison makes this harder to challenge in some respect as you are vastly outnumbered and have to choose when to challenge and when to roll with resistance," she says, at the same time acknowledging it can help when assessing risk.

"Being able to view an individual when he is associating with his peers or friends in custody can give me an insight into some of his views or attitudes he may not be as open to discussing with me in supervision. Whilst we need to be careful not to

judge someone solely on how they behave on a wing, it does give us an interesting insight into behaviour we might not get to witness when we're in a community team," she explains.

While derogatory remarks, catcalls and sexual comments may be expected from the inmates, Amanda confirms some of the inappropriate behaviour she has experienced has come from colleagues.

"When I had my first oral hearing as an offender supervisor, I dug out my trusted old skirt suit that I used to wear when I was a court duty officer. As I walked through the prison and into the office, I was met with comments from the male members of staff!"

Their comments about her outfit and the way she looked made her feel so uncomfortable she says: "Whilst this was all challenged at the time, I always wear a trouser suit for oral hearings now."

Amanda loves her job and enjoys working in a prison but agrees that the loud, chaotic, bureaucratic environment wouldn't be for everyone – male or female.

"I was lucky enough to have a placement before taking a full-time position and this allowed me to get a sense of whether or not this would be the right role for me.

"I would suggest that anyone thinking about coming in should contact their local OMU department and arrange to go in for a day or even try and get a placement.

"Each prison works very differently depending on the category; if it's a training prison or a sex offender estate for example.

"We are all still probation officers at the end of the day though, so give us a call, we would be happy to discuss what the job entails," says Amanda.

Elaine*

After working in a women's prison for a number of years, Elaine made the move to a male prison and immediately noticed the differences. Some of which echo the headlines seen in the press.

"Male prisons feel much more volatile, dangerous and unpredictable with many more instances of prisoners having mobile phones, weapons and drugs – especially spice," she says, also pointing out a higher potential for radicalisation.

Women inmates by contrast are much more likely to confide in the prison officers, self-harm when distressed or angry, and have openly close and sometimes intimate relationships with each other.

Working a four day week and holding a caseload of 40 inmates (many of who are serving life or an imprisonment for public protection sentence), Elaine also attends monthly Pathfinder meetings. Here she will discuss inmates who may be involved in radicalising others or who have extremist and terrorist offences.

Like Chris, Elaine thinks that having other women in the



team can improve the experience of working in a prison. "In my current probation team there are four probation officers; three of them are female including the manager.

"I am in a room with mostly male staff including prison offender supervisors and I would feel more comfortable if there were other women in my room," says Elaine admitting: "I do feel isolated at times and seek out the other female probation officers and female prison officers to talk to."

Elaine thinks that being a woman means you sometimes need to be more assertive and "stick to your grounds" in order to get your point made. "I have noticed now that I am working part-time, I get a few remarks made about this from male prison colleagues and that can make you feel defensive about why you don't work more days.

"The probation officers here have an upper caseload limit, which is lower than the caseloads that the prison offender supervisors hold due to the more serious nature of our cases. This can lead to friction with the male prison offender supervisors," Elaine reveals.

"I used to really like working in the prison environment when I was in a female estate and I would recommend other women working there too. However, I do not like working in a male prison in the current climate. Due to the serious cuts to prison staff budgets, there is more violence, and more attacks on staff.

"I am concerned that there are plans to put more probation staff in prisons, including those who do not wish to work in this environment – including newly qualified officers. I think this is inappropriate, and with the current crisis in prisons, would be dangerous," says Elaine.

TAYTULA BURKE

*Name has been changed at the request of the member.

NEW STAFF NETWORKS

Many Napo members will remember the old staff networks that existed prior to the unfortunate Transforming Rehabilitation and abolition of the Trusts to create the new NPS and CRCs. These were Association of Black Probation Officers, National Association of Asian Probation Staff, LAGIP (Lesbians, Gay Men, Bisexual and Transgendered Individuals working in probation and family courts) and NDSN (National Disabled Staff Network).

These disappeared after the split and a vacuum was created. Two and a half years later we are pleased to announce the birth of the new Networks. These are **DAWN** (Disability, Advocacy Wellbeing Network), **PiPP** (Pride in Prison and Probation which covers minority Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity), and **RISE** (Racial Inclusion and striving for Equality, covering Black Asian and Minority Ethnic matters).

They are open to staff who are employed throughout NOMS (Now HM Prisons and Probation Service) as well as colleagues from CRCs and the contracted estate but unfortunately not Cafcass which is covered by a different department.

The Networks are for everyone whether you identify with the protected characteristics or not and we would encourage as many of you to register as possible. The aim is to provide a voice for employees to ensure all our staff irrespective of protected characteristics feel supported and accepted (HM Prisons and Probation Service) and striving towards equal and inclusive practices and processes to positively impact the organisational culture within. It is hoped that Napo members will join and grow the relevant Networks embracing diversity as a core value within Napo. What this means for you: peer support, a collaborative,

accepting environment, community feeling and togetherness, having a say on issues that affect you, being more than a lone voice, development opportunities. The aim is to create a great place to work – a safe and inclusive and diverse working environment that encourages respect and equality.

If you need help to join one of our networks email

DAWN@noms.gsi.gov.uk

PiPP@noms.gsi.gov

RISE@noms.gsi.gov.uk

Eriks Puce, Area Lead for DAWN South East England

Eriks.puce@probation.gsi.gov.uk

Richard Clark, Area Lead for DAWN London

Richard.clark2@hmps.gsi.gov.uk



DAWN

Disability, Advocacy Wellbeing Network

PiPP

Pride in Prison and Probation

RISE

Racial Inclusion and striving for Equality

Free access to *Probation Journal* online for Napo members

Napo members have free online access to the *Probation Journal* and full access to SAGE's Criminology and Criminal Justice catalogue. This provides members with on-line access to 26 criminal justice journals on-line for free and includes titles such as:

- Youth Justice
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- Journal of Drug Issues
- Sexual Abuse Journal
- European Journal of Probation

This is an excellent benefit to us as a professional body, and can provide a valuable resource for practitioners, staff and managers. It is also another good reason for practitioners undertaking probation training qualifications to join Napo.

Access to the Probation Journal and other SAGE publications can be accessed via the Napo website www.napo.org.uk. Members will need to log into the secure members-only area of the Napo website using membership login in details, then click on 'Publications' and full information about how to



access the Probation Journal content (and the other titles) via SAGE Journals is given. Once you have set up an account with Sage Journals you will then be able to access this site directly. Many articles in the Probation Journal are published on-line in advance of being published in the hard copy. Registering via the Sage Journal website for email alerts is a good way of keeping up-to-date with new articles that have been published, or you can register for email alerts about the content of the current edition. Email alerts are available for any of the Journals in the Criminology catalogue and is a great way of finding out what has been published in the journals you are interested in as soon as they are published.

You can also follow the Probation Journal via twitter (@ProbationJnl) and receive information about forthcoming articles or special editions, access to the Editorial ahead of the hard copy being published and lots more. Look out for information in future editions of NQ about the Probation Journal including, ways practitioners can get involved, writing for the publication and practitioner response pieces.

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Women's Health Matters: The menopause and work

Almost 70% of women aged 16 to 64-years-old are in paid employment in the UK. Three and a half million of those are between the ages of 50 and 59. Despite an aging female workforce, the menopause and its effects on the workplace has largely remained a taboo subject.

At Napo's AGM last year, Ikky Bhogal proposed a motion in a bid to generate more awareness of this important issue. *Women's Health Matters* which was carried unanimously asked Napo to:

- highlight the issues of the menopause for women in the workplace;
- promote sickness absence procedures which can take account of menopause related sickness absence;
- encourage openness and discussion amongst women members;
- promote training/awareness raising about menopause within Probation and Cafcass.

The motion was originally proposed in 2015 but could not be debated. During a



break in conference, Ikky overheard some women members wondering why the menopause was a motion when there were "bigger things to be worried about."

Ikky says: "My ears pricked up and I joined the debate and eventually let them know I was the author of that motion. What I learned from that is we as women don't always help or support our colleagues going

through the menopause because we have 'been there worn the t-shirt' and believe it is something you don't make a fuss about."

Given the conversation that took place last year, conference's overwhelming support of the motion was a surprise and she says: "I actually had women and even a few male colleagues come over and tell me it was a really good motion and spoke about their experience supporting their partners or members of their family."

The physical effects of the menopause are well documented, but little has been published on its impact on working life.

"From my research I have found the

main difficulties for women during this time are poor concentration, tiredness, low confidence and feeling depressed. But, if a woman says she is feeling depressed as a result of the menopause, it is not taken as seriously if she was depressed for any other reason," Ikky explains.

Hot flushes are a major source of distress for women, and they are often exacerbated by poorly ventilated offices, delivering presentations and taking part in formal meetings. The combined effects of hot flushes, poor concentration and bad memory are often wrongly attributed to incompetence.

Ikky thinks that being a taboo subject and sexism in the workplace has made the menopause "just another burden impacting the business needs".

"A lot of the boards or execs are comprised of men, and women who want to progress have learned never to make a fuss about anything for fear of being seen as a feminist or a problem," says Ikky.

Ikky says that although there are not a lot of women approaching Napo reps to help them with issues relating to the menopause, she knows of a few. But are Napo reps equipped to deal with them?

"I don't think we are fully equipped. I think there could be more training. It's





almost like looking at the medical model of disability where the disabled person is seen as the problem, but I see the menopause as a societal responsibility because women are large contributors to the economy.

“Not all reps might want to take on this specialism, but I think there should be someone in each branch that women can go to. If this doesn’t happen there should at least be a manual about the symptoms and giving advice on how this can be incorporated into policies like Emotional Wellbeing or Sickness Absence,” Ikky says.

Since the motion was backed wholeheartedly by Napo members, Ikky is optimistic about what could happen as a result of the motion being carried.

“I would like to see the CRC and NPS incorporate it into their policies just like learning difficulties or disabilities have been. It should be treated as part of the equality strand since some women’s menopause last longer than a year and it does have an adverse impact on their day to day life so in one way it could be classed as a disability,” she explains.

Contact your local branch or Napo HQ if you are experiencing difficulties in the workplace as a result of the menopause.

TAYTULA BURKE

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Now more than ever it is important for female activists to stand up and be counted. Women – who account for more than 70% of probation staff – have been disproportionately affected by Transforming Rehabilitation. As further reforms loom and campaigns for harmonised maternity leave and issues around menopause in the workplace gather momentum; NQ speaks to Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah about overcoming obstacles, solidarity and making sure voices are amplified during these uncertain times.

For some people, activism is as natural to them as breathing. Pushing for equality, stamping out bigotry and defending workers' rights are just as instinctual.

Others, however, do not feel as compelled to speak up on the issues that directly affect them or others around them. But as Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah warns: "That radio silence is an ugly thing."

"You only need to look at what's happening now in the world. It seems ever so fragile, and for me if we don't do anything about things that affect other people and not necessarily ourselves, we will feel it way down the line," she adds.

Phyllis has been a long time campaigner and proud advocate for race and gender equality, LGBT rights and the trade union movement. "I know it sounds corny and cliché," she says, "but I just want the world to be a better place."

Cliché or not, Phyllis's work has not gone unrecognised. Mentioned in every UK list honouring influential LGBT people, she also made the headlines in 2016 for turning down an MBE on a point of principle.

While accolades might be enough for some, Phyllis is driven by a deeper motivation: "I don't want a younger version of me to have to go through some of the stuff I had to," she says.

Recalling a time when she was around 11-years-old and told to hide in a shop doorway by a passer-by because the National Front were marching through Enfield Town, Phyllis says: "I will never forget that old woman telling me 'they don't like your sort'".

As she got older "her sort" came to mean more than just



the colour of her skin, and like many women, there were more barriers that would have to be overcome.

"I think when you look at intersectionality and intersectional matters, it will show you that you can be discriminated against, blocked or stifled just for being a woman, just for being LGBT, just for being black or just for being disabled. I happen to be all four, and at one stage, I was younger and that was also barrier," she explains.

But Phyllis is pragmatic in her approach to these so-called barriers and says: "It's other people who create barriers, but it's our job to break through them, go over them, go under them or go round them."

Considering how instrumental women have been in the trade union movement, gender specific issues often give way to those that affect "the all" instead. "Sometimes we need to look at the root causes of why we are not pushing forward as much on a particular agenda. There is a history of women being silenced," Phyllis explains.

Phyllis draws correlations between some Napo members being civil servants and unable to speak freely on some issues, and a time in the 70s where women had to leave the civil service once they married.

"When you pull those things together, it might mean we haven't had as much opportunity to amplify our voices, be decision makers and to do things that men take as a given," she says.

For this reason, Phyllis sees male members as really important allies. "It's not just women who should be shouting about these things from the rooftops. We should be ensuring that the men in our trade union movement understand and realise that just because it is not their issue it doesn't mean it doesn't have to be their struggle. An injury to one is an injury to all."

With this in mind, just how good are trade unions at representing the wider issues faced by all sections of their membership?

"In the wider trade union movement, I think there is a lot to be said about visibility and representation of women, of young people, black people, LGBT people and people with disabilities

throughout our structures,” she says adding: “It shouldn’t be that equality is an afterthought tagged on to the end just to tick a box, as we then become as bad as the employer.”

Of all the obstacles to women becoming more active in union activity, high workloads are perhaps the most pressing. “The moment you feel inundated with work, you are unable to take forward anything else,” says Phyllis, adding that performance management puts people under “undue pressure to deliver on targets”.

Phyllis commends Napo for launching its workload campaign and says: “Where I welcome Napo’s workload campaign is the conversation about mental health. The moment your workload is excessive, you are undoubtedly going to feel stress and stress is one of the factors that lead to ill mental health.

“I think it’s a sad state of affairs that managers are not well equipped to support their staff, and they place undue pressure on them because they are not thinking about their wellbeing, they are just thinking about delivering.”

Looking to the rest of the year Phyllis has high hopes for the trade union movement. “I would like to see the wider trade union movement tackle underrepresentation.

“I would also like to see them get stronger in their ability to be able to negotiate at government level so members’ terms are not eroded.

“Unions should be working more cohesively and closer on matters that intersect their memberships.

“I would also like to see our trade union movement stand up very strong and very loudly with amplified voices against the attacks that are happening at home and abroad regarding migrants and refugees and to speak up against islamophobia.

“Lastly, I would like our trade union movement to be about equality and equity and not just say it.”

TAYTULA BURKE

Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah is a co-founder, trustee and executive director of UK Black Pride. Phyllis sits on the TUC race relations committee and is currently trustee of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights charity, Stonewall.



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#MaternityRightsMatter campaign gathers momentum



The Napo campaign to have maternity and other family friendly policies harmonised across the probation service gathered momentum on International Women's Day (8 March) as members took to Twitter to show their support.

Members posed with #MaternityRightsMatters selfie boards in a bid to highlight the unfair differences between maternity policies available to NPS employees and their civil service colleagues at NOMS.

Speaking on the campaign, Sarah Friday, National Official and WiN lead said: "It was great that so many members took up our request to support the hashtag pic campaign for their maternity rights.

"Members were getting increasingly frustrated at the



It was really
important to drive
home to NOMS the
anger members feel
over being treated
in such a way

ongoing delay in implementation of the policy. NOMS exasperated this when in January they implemented the draconian Attendance Management Policy against a background of union opposition – both ourselves and POA were in dispute.

"NOMS said they had no choice but to implement, claiming it was '*necessary to align NOMS with the Ministry Justice and with wider Civil Service Policy*'. Yet NOMS refused to apply the same principle and introduce policies that would be of benefit to our members. When it looked like we were finally getting close to implementation, NPS proposed they would link improvements to maternity and family friendly policies to asking long service staff to give up some annual leave!

"It was really important to drive home to NOMS the anger members feel over being treated in such a way and the pictures tweeted with the #MaternityRightsMatters logo has helped with this."

International Women's Day was chosen to highlight this anger because of its historical links with women in work and trade union action.

The day came about as a result of a demonstration in New York in the early 1900s in support of a garment workers' strike that had taken place the year before.

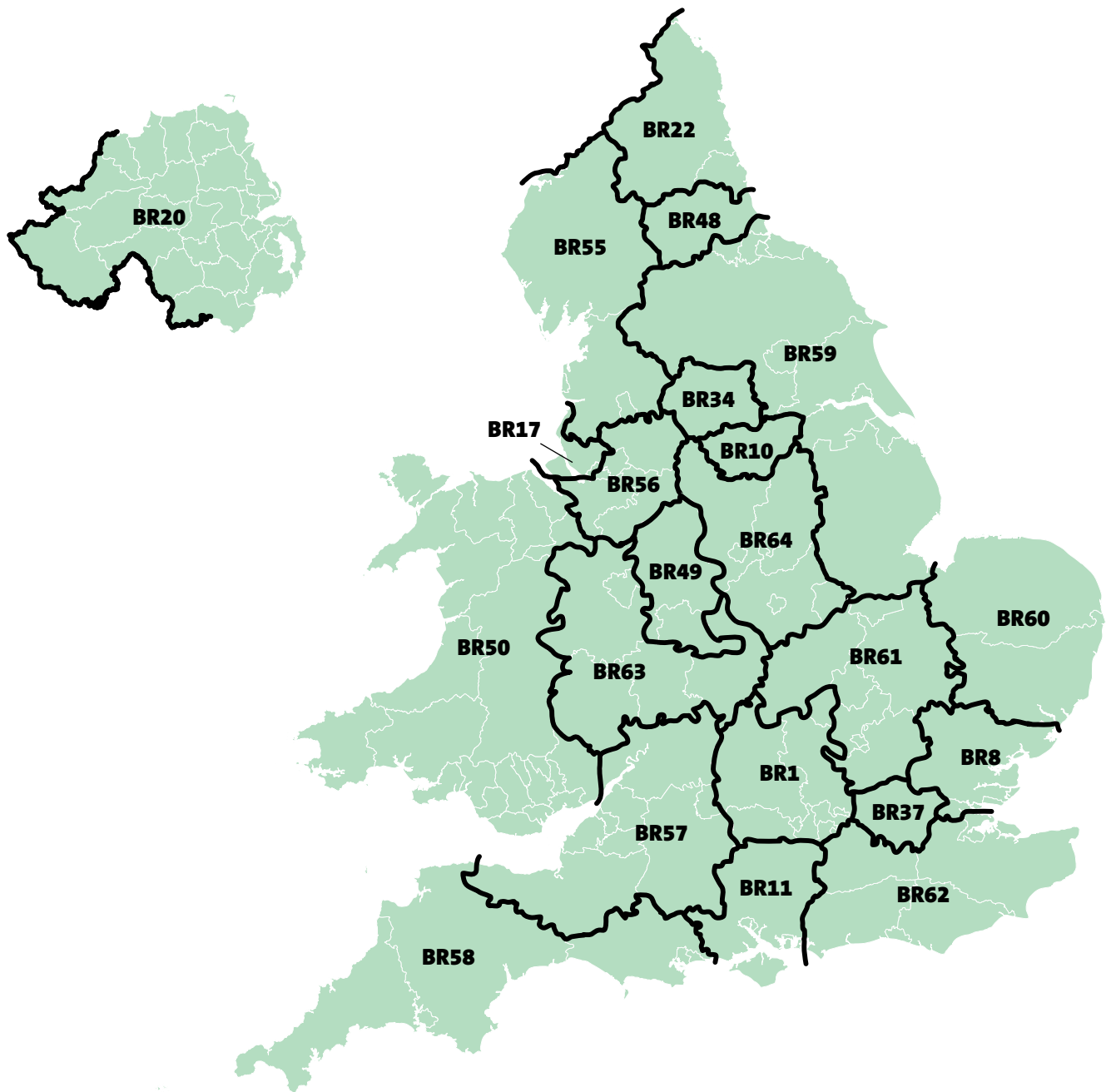
A few years later in 1917 Russian women took to the streets of St Petersburg on International Women's Day to demand the end of World War I and an end to food shortages. Other workers quickly joined them and the government's attempts at stopping the demonstration failed when women spoke to the soldiers and persuaded them to lay down their arms. A few days later the monarch collapsed and the revolution began.

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