



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service

PROBATION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

2020



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Foreword and Introduction

I am very pleased to present the Annual Report of the Probation Service for 2020 to Ms. Hildegard Naughton TD, Minister for State, Department of Justice. This report sets out the work and performance of the Probation Service during 2020 against our key objectives and priorities.

Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, 2020 was an unprecedented year for the Probation Service. Throughout the year, the Probation Service met its challenges head on and as an essential service, continued to work effectively across the country. Operational risk assessments were completed; measures were put in place to ensure our staff remained safe; priority client groups were identified to include higher risk and more vulnerable clients; service delivery to prisons was retained; and we continued to work with our colleagues in the Courts Service, playing our part in ensuring ongoing access to justice.

I took over the Directorship of the Probation Service on 20th July 2020 and would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague, Ita Burke, Director of Corporate Affairs, who acted as Interim Director prior to my arrival.

The interruption to the work of the Courts resulted in a significant reduction in the level of referrals in 2020. Notwithstanding that reduction, the Service worked with more than 15,500 offenders in the community and 2,700 prisoners in custody. We completed over 9,300 Probation Assessment Reports as well as over 2,100 Community Service Assessment Reports. Achieving this, in the context of the pandemic, demonstrates the commitment of our staff to contribute to public safety and the administration of Justice.

2020 marked the final year of our Strategic Plan 2018-2020, *One Vision, One Team, One Standard*, which set out five strategic goals for us to achieve over the three years. The Strategic Plan has been an all-round success with all five goals and underpinning objectives well advanced despite the limitation faced. While last year also saw the final year of the third joint *Irish Prison Service & Probation Service Strategic Plan 2018-2020*, it has now been extended for a further

12 months due to the change of focus needed during the pandemic.

The Probation Service continued its whole society approach to reducing re-offending, working with all statutory stakeholders, particularly criminal justice partners, to ensure that our actions and policies remained aligned. Working to continually improve outcomes in the management, rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders is a priority every year for the Probation Service.

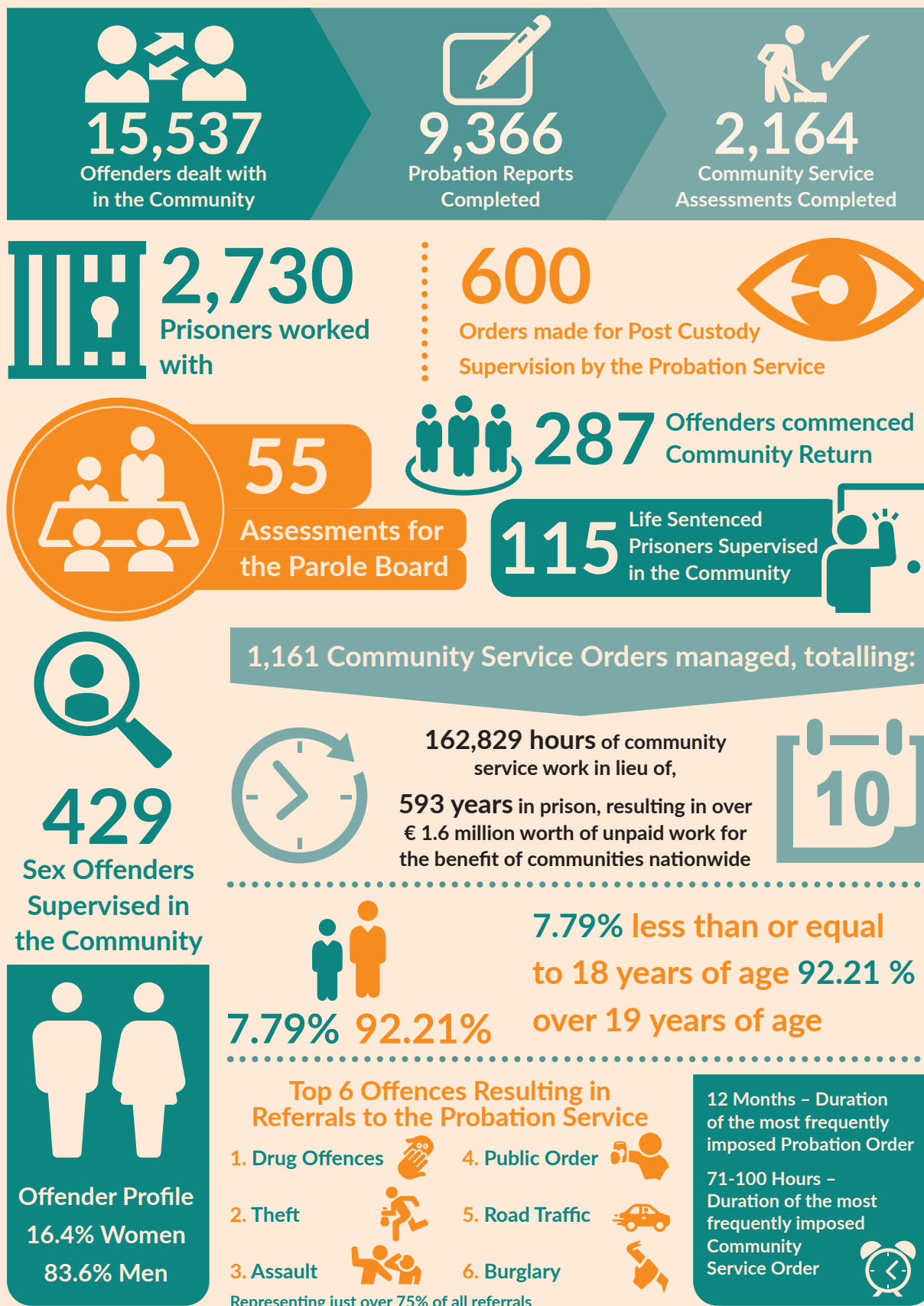
We continue to recognise the hard work and additional benefit our community and voluntary partners bring to support desistance. In 2020 we provided €16.8m in funding, through the Department of Justice, to a range of Community Based Organisations whose excellent projects and services continue to support the work of the Probation Service.

The Probation Service remains dedicated to rehabilitating offenders because our work is based on the belief that everyone has the capacity to change. We want our service users to accept responsibility for their offending and work to make positive, effective and lasting change in their lives. We also continue to ensure that victims, who contact our Service, receive a positive experience and gain a deeper understanding of our work with offenders.

Our expert and dedicated staff make the Probation Service what it is, an effective and passionate social work service which is committed to client engagement and public safety through collaborative working. I am proud of the professionalism, commitment and resilience of our staff, staff who rose to overcome the professional and personal challenges of delivering essential public services in unprecedented times.

Mark Wilson, Director

2020 in Numbers



Impact of Covid in 2020



Service Delivery

- Probation Service categorised as an essential service.
- More than 1,000 high risk cases prioritised for additional attention (e.g. those posing significant risk of harm, sex offenders, perpetrators of domestic violence).
- Covid resource folder added to the Staff Portal and updated regularly. A complete repository for all related guidance and support documentation.
- Revised Practice Guidelines were developed to support service delivery. They provide guidance, support and advice on engagement with people subject to supervision and community service orders, as well as assessment and report completion.
- Our work with service users in prisons was continued safely during all public health risk levels. This was managed in accordance with the Irish Prison Service's infection control policies.



Estate

- Probation Service offices were all adapted to ensure compliance with public health guidelines.
- Office risk assessments undertaken and completed.
- Hand hygiene equipment installed at all entrances and exits as well as throughout all offices where necessary.
- Social distancing signage displayed in all offices.
- Posters placed prominently in all offices advising on Covid-19 safety measures.
- Greatly increased cleaning regime implemented in line with Return to Work Protocol.
- Protective screens installed in all interview rooms across the service.
- Further arrangements put in place in all offices to ensure face to face interviews with service users could be conducted safely.
- Return to work induction procedures implemented.
- Staff rosters and contact tracing logs put into operation.
- First Aid Measures updated.
- Footfall in all offices limited to essential use only.



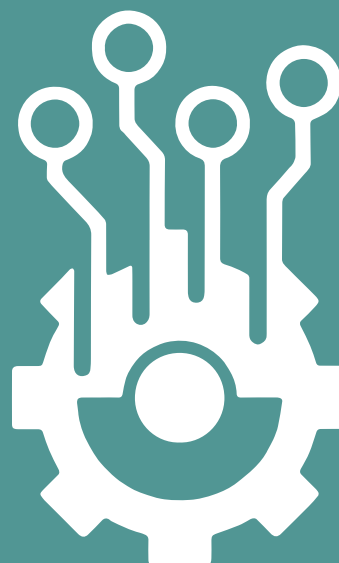
Health and Safety

- Probation Service Covid-19 Response Management Group established. Group meeting weekly to support managers in making the necessary arrangements for staff to access buildings and making necessary modifications.
- Staff Return to Work Protocol developed.
- Staff Lead Worker representatives appointed working with HR and Health and Safety Unit, ensuring full implementation of the Protocol.
- Regular communication and engagement with staff throughout 2020 on the changing environment.
- 'Living with Covid Plan' developed to provide staff with clear and up to date guidance surrounding working through the various levels of public health restrictions.
- Multiple wellbeing initiatives to support staff promoted by HR Unit



Modernising

- Remote working for staff enabled as a matter of priority to ensure business continuity.
- Majority of staff equipped with laptops and other required devices within 3 months. This was supported by IMT.
- Online GDPR training provided for all staff working remotely.
- Video link system in prisons utilised to facilitate completion of custody reports.
- On-line training adapted and delivered ensuring that training needs of staff could be met remotely.
- New staff were provided with a purpose built online induction training programme.



Rising to the Challenges posed by Covid 19

In accordance with the high priority accorded to 'Access to Justice', and our role within public safety, the Probation Service was categorised as an essential service and maintained service delivery throughout the challenges of 2020.

The provision of services to the Courts and Prisons were of particular significance throughout the year.

We played a significant role in supporting access to justice through our work, by continuing to provide pre sanction assessment reports to the Courts Service, to assist the Court in its decision making function. These reports provide a thorough assessment of the adult or young person, are advisory and make proposals regarding the person's suitability for a community sanction.

One of our most important tasks during Covid-19 has been to facilitate the early release and supervision of many carefully selected prisoners, in close partnership with the Irish Prison Service, through programmes such as Community Return. Services to prisons was also maintained throughout all levels of public health restrictions, by our Prison based team who worked with 2,700 prisoners in custody.

As a demand led service the Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected the flow of work received by the Probation Service through the Courts system. Most noticeably, the volume of referrals received reduced considerably in line with the levels of restrictions, particularly during Level 5 lockdowns. Collaboration and communication with colleagues across the criminal justice sector played an essential part to keeping services going.

Despite the challenges posed, the ebb and flow of referrals, moving in and out of varying levels of restrictions, Probation Staff remained unwavering in their commitment, working with those who posed most risk of harm to the public, or groups who were highly vulnerable such as young people or those who were homeless.

We worked with more than 15,500 offenders in the community.



We completed over 9,300 Probation Assessment Reports

2,100 Community Service Assessment Reports



We prioritised custody reports requested by the Courts Service through video link

Priority high risk clients were identified for additional intervention and support



Behind the scenes, staff in various roles ranging from administrative duties, IT support, Service Officers and “front of house” staff combined their collective efforts as a team to continue with our essential work and role in public safety. There has been innovation, flexibility and co-operation in maintaining services and sustaining people on probation supervision through the crisis.

As we moved through the year amidst the different levels of restrictions we moved from initial lockdown where our offices had to close with all staff working remotely to the gradual re-opening of offices and resumption of face to face contact with clients. This was progressed in a planned and incremental manner mindful of the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and clients, and managed by the Probation Service Covid-19 Response Management Group. The Group worked closely with the Department of Justice, other criminal justice agencies and partner bodies to ensure that the best possible safety infrastructure and processes were in place before re-opening.

Revised Operational Guidelines, along with supplementary practice guidance were developed providing additional guidance to all operational staff and managers to support service delivery during the pandemic.

2020 was an extraordinary year, a year which suddenly catapulted the service into new ways of working, using technology for interacting with all stakeholders, including people on probation. It is important to recognise the broad range of people we work with, many with complicated life experiences, and heightened difficulties some have faced in their lives, particularly during the earlier lockdown phases, including those dealing with mental health, addiction and physical health issues.

Below are extracts from articles written by front line Probation Officers regarding their lived experience of probation practice during 2020.

Practitioner Reflections of Probation Practice

The 12th March 2020 was the beginning of a public health emergency in Ireland due to the Covid-19 pandemic, marking the onset of new ways of working for government services across the country. In line with public health guidance, the management of probation supervision was, in the main, delivered through telephone contact by practitioners who were working remotely. Probation work continued in uncharted territory with Probation Service staff committed to delivering the best possible service.

Key lessons from this experience was the reminder of the importance of remaining focused on the very basics of probation work, “building on the relationship” with our service users and adopting flexible approaches. The crisis created a shift in emphasis, allowing for more reflective practice and more person-centred engagement with clients, the core of social work values.



*Pictured: Sheena Quigley,
Probation Officer*

– Sheena Quigley

Over 12 months later, the Probation Service has continued to adopt a blended approach of remote and office working as required by levels of disease in the community. Staff have demonstrated commitment to innovative work practices and reframing of productivity to continue essential service delivery and meet our responsibilities within the Criminal Justice System. (Full article here)

[http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/0/OCFA7616F-37855588025862C005430B4/\\$File/Sheena%20Norton.pdf](http://www.probation.ie/EN/PB/0/OCFA7616F-37855588025862C005430B4/$File/Sheena%20Norton.pdf)

Extract from an article written by Áine Morris, Probation Officer based in Dublin at the Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit.-

<https://www.cep-probation.org/probation-work-in-dublin-emerging-from-lockdown/>

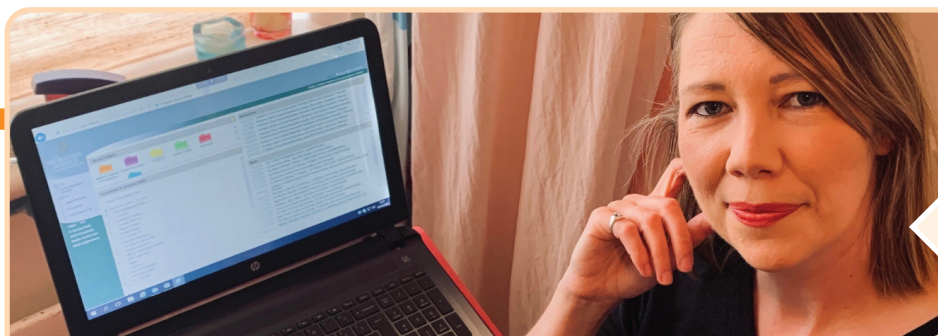


*Pictured:
Áine Morris,
Probation
Officer*

Twelve weeks ago I couldn't have imagined how quickly my colleagues and I would adapt to working remotely. As we moved into lockdown community based Probation Officers began working from home. Despite the challenges work has continued at a steady, busy pace. The use of zoom and teleconferencing has allowed for ongoing peer and interagency contact. Work life, though changed, has gone on and we are now moving to another stage of the "new normality".

Reflections from a community-based team working in Dublin North Inner City, Jan Alvey, Senior Probation Officer.

<https://www.cep-probation.org/probation-how-we-work-as-probation-officers-in-times-like-these/>



*Pictured:
Jan Alvey,
Senior
Probation
Officer*

In addition to remote access facilitating the team to use the case management system, it has also facilitated access to online HR supports, guidance documents, and other online resources that support self-care practice. Telephone support from team members, colleagues, managers and our human resource team, has gone some way to strengthen resilience and unite us in overcoming the challenges together. Although we continue to miss those bonding chats over a cuppa!



SECTION

1

Evidence Informed Practice

Evidence Informed Practice

Despite an extremely challenging year, the Probation Service delivered our core business motivating offenders to change. This was achieved through the development of positive professional relationships, by thoroughly assessing each individual's risks and needs, combined with the application of interventions and tailored responses.

Both of the following initiatives demonstrate the Service's commitment to improved outcomes and quality in Probation practice. Work continued in the development of both throughout the year amidst the operating environment of the Covid- 19 pandemic.

Getting ready to implement the Offender Supervision Framework (OSF)

In 2020, the Probation Service engaged with the Centre for Effective Services (CES) to help the Service get ready to implement the Offender Supervision Framework. This Framework, designed in 2019 in partnership with Velia Ltd, international consultancy company, is a bespoke best practice model used with those under Probation Supervision, drawing on "what works" and "who works" principles and desistance theories.

Building on the existing work from the design phase, the Centre for Effective Services engaged with staff across the Service, to identify actions, supports and resources needed to make the new Framework a reality. A joint Steering Committee was established to oversee this preparation stage.

This phase of 'getting ready' for implementation required an agile and innovative approach by CES and Probation Service staff alike throughout the process. Various aspects of the work were impacted and adapted to on-line platforms, due to the challenges brought about by Covid- 19. CES organised a series of focus groups and interviews to hear different perspectives and ideas across the Probation Service about what was needed to be put in place in preparation for implementation. This work, completed by May 2020, will inform the future direction required by the Service, for the programme's development and implementation.



Pictured: Members of the Steering Group and the Centre for Effective Services team in January 2020

Risk Based approach Workload Implementation.

The new Risk Based Approach to Workload, jointly developed in partnership with the Probation Officers' branch of the Fórsa Trade Union and road-tested by several teams, was agreed following a ballot in February 2020. A working group was set up to take the model forward, draft an implementation plan and support and oversee its implementation. The Group set about its work meeting on-line on a regular basis, demonstrating ongoing commitment and collaboration in this important task. It is anticipated that the implementation of the risk based approach will "go live" in early 2021. The model determines Probation Officer workloads, taking into account the fundamental principles of the risk, need and responsivity presented by individuals on probation supervision.

Multi Agency Work

Multi Agency work is critical to achieving more integrated and effective offender management. In 2020, the Service strengthened collaboration and partnership work, throughout the challenges posed by the pandemic.



Working together through these unprecedented times, was of particular significance, especially in managing those presenting high risk of harm to others.

The successful approaches outlined below are underpinned by the "Action Plan for the Joint Management of Offenders 2019-2021", between the Department of Justice, the Probation Service, the Irish Prison Service and An Garda Síochána.

Sex Offender Risk Assessment & Management (SORAM) model.

The Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management (SORAM) was established in 2010 to support the co-operation, and co-ordination, between key statutory organisations involved in managing the risk posed to the community by convicted sex offenders and also in safeguarding the welfare of children. SORAM is led jointly by An Garda Síochána and the Probation Service, with the active support of Tusla, The Child and Family Agency, Local Authority Housing, and the Irish Prison Service.

This year saw the commencement of the National Strategy for SORAM 2020-2023. This sets out a range of goals for SORAM under the Four Pillars of Oversight; Training; Development; and Communication. The National SORAM office (NSO) continued to provide support and oversight to all Local SORAM Teams throughout the year.

Covid-19 and Public Health Protocols have meant that case management and inter-agency co-operation presented a challenge for SORAM at all levels, but with the use of technology and inter-agency cooperation, SORAM meetings and risk management procedures have continued.



Joint Agency Response to Crime (JARC)

JARC initiatives continued at several locations nationwide in 2020. Given the challenges faced by all agencies and clients involved due to Covid-19, interagency communication and co-operation to support the achievement of JARC aims and objectives, to effectively support offender management and community safety have been especially important. The National

Co-ordination Team continued to contribute to governance and oversight developments through ongoing work related to GDPR, structures and progressing evaluation of the initiative.

Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence.

The onset of Covid-19 and restrictions on movement due to lockdowns throughout the year was particularly challenging for families who experienced domestic abuse. The Probation Service categorised domestic abuse cases as a priority for supervision throughout this challenging time, being mindful of safety issues for all concerned.

Holding perpetrators of intimate partner abuse to account whilst working to ensure the safety of victims is central to the work of the Probation Service in the area of domestic abuse. During 2020, the Probation Service continued to meet its responsibilities under the Second National Strategy of Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence 2016-2021.

Working closely and effectively with our partners, particularly An Garda Síochána, Tusla and organisations delivering domestic abuse programmes was particularly important in safeguarding those at most risk from domestic abuse in our communities throughout the pandemic.

A number of priority areas were progressed in 2020 including:

- ▲ Delivery of online training for staff in respect of rigorous assessment of Domestic Violence cases, victim awareness and familiarisation with our relevant policies.
- ▲ In February 2020, the Probation Service was represented at the Confederation of European Probation (CEP)/EuroPris Domestic Violence working group meeting in Brussels, which was an opportunity to share learning on international best practice in the field.
- ▲ Supplementary practice guidelines and interventions material were developed in April 2020, focusing on risks posed to partners and children, with particular emphasis on emerging challenges during the pandemic such as recent unemployment, substance misuse and mental health deterioration.
- ▲ In September 2020, the Service participated in the annual Working with Perpetrators European Network conference.
- ▲ To mark the “16 days of Action” opposing gender based violence, a virtual awareness raising event was held via zoom in November, with contributions from Pavee Point, the Garda National Protective Services Bureau, and input by Trinity College on children’s experience of intimate partner abuse.



Pictured: Carmel Donnelly Regional Manager Probation Service, speaking at the WWP EN Annual Conference

Community Service and Community Return

Community Service Innovation – Safe Working

2020 proved a very challenging year for the operation of Community Service nationwide. Some of the challenges posed were reduced capacity and only outdoor work was permissible. The current model for Community Service relies heavily on group based activity carried out on a range of sites (host organisations) secured largely through the community and voluntary sector. A consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, necessitated a 'stop and start' approach to the implementation of the Community Service scheme during 2020.

Due to the public health restrictions imposed in March 2020 Community Service sites were suspended and work commenced to develop systems to support safe re-opening in line with public health restrictions and the Government's Returning to Work Safely Protocol.

In mid-July, Community Service sites began to reopen on a phased basis nationwide. New Community Service Site operating procedures to manage the risk of transmission of Covid- 19

were implemented on all open sites. Probation Service staff supported this through the completion of site risk assessments, new site induction processes, and the provision and stocking of PPE. Community Service Supervisors played a key role in direct Host Organisation and client engagement and through the development and implementation of standardised control measures for Community Service Sites.

Community Service Innovation – Model of Operation

Due to limitations placed on the operation of face to face group work Community Service Sites alternatives to these traditional options were developed and piloted in 2020. Opportunities to use online learning for Integrated Community Service were developed and utilised. These innovative programmes have demonstrated that "necessity really is the mother of invention". In 2020 possibilities for clients to engage in meaningful online programmed work as part of Community Service were progressed, in partnership with IASIO (Irish Association for Social Inclusion), NIACRO, and the Irish Red Cross (Prisons to Community Initiative).



Pictured: Community Service sites



Pictured: Community Service Supervisors Team assisting with the Simon Community Covid-19 Food Appeal

Community Return

The Community Return scheme is an incentivised scheme for the supervised release of qualifying prisoners. Community Return has many benefits, including providing opportunities and practical support to offenders so that they can avail of employment or training and contribute productively on their return to society. The Scheme gives prisoners, whom the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service have assessed as being suitable and motivated, the opportunity of early and renewable temporary release with resettlement support. It is available for those who have been assessed as posing no threat to the community, are serving more than one year and fewer than eight years, and who have served at least 50% of their sentence.

However, as Covid-19 has impacted so many aspects of operational practice, the arrangements for the Community Return scheme have had to adjust. At the outset of the pandemic, the Probation Service, in consultation with the Irish Prison Service, put arrangements in place to continue the delivery of the Community Return Scheme throughout 2020. Compliance rates with the Community Return scheme remained high in 2020, above 85%.

Here are reflections by two Community Service Supervisors about the impact of working in the context of Covid-19 and implementing the new operational procedures.

Community Service Supervisor

Site Name: Secondary School Site, Dublin

New Practice: All tools & surfaces are wiped down and sprayed with sanitiser every day to reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19

Impact: The practice of wiping all tools & surfaces down helps put the client at ease knowing that they can attend a safe site with protocols and procedures that will make their Community Service safe to attend.

Community Service Supervisor

Site Name: Sports Training Facility, Dublin

Returning to work on site wasn't a major challenge for me, I had been redeployed to Dublin Civil Defence when the country went into lockdown and I had been carrying out sanitisation procedures as part of the daily routine of Civil Defence duties. The training we had been given prior to returning to work combined with the training of Civil Defence enhanced my ability to pass on the protocols to clients.

New Practice: We have to remind our clients daily of sanitisation of tools but also of every-day objects such as mobile devices, keys, pens and other things we may come into contact with that we often don't think about. We also need to remember to keep a safe social distance from others and remind clients of the symptoms of Covid-19

Impact: The more I practice this the easier it becomes to implement into my work. Knowing we are not only keeping each other safe but other users of the organisations we are working alongside and our families is important.

We must also remember that some people don't believe Covid 19 is real, they may refuse to adhere to the advice been given and this could become challenging. Thankfully however I have not experienced anyone who has been uncooperative on site. All clients are aware of the protocols and carry out the work assigned to them while adhering to safety instructions.

Supporting Sentence Management and Rehabilitation of those who serve prison sentences

The majority of our work is based in communities and courts nationwide. In addition to this work, Probation Officers also provide a service to clients in the prisons. There is a probation team based in each of the country's prisons. During 2020, we continued to deliver on our three year joint Strategy (2018-2020) with the Irish Prison Service, albeit in the face of dealing with the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

At any given time, Probation Officers in prisons are working with approximately half of the prison population. This work includes completing assessments on life sentenced prisoners and home circumstances reports for the Parole Board. Probation staff also conduct offence-focused and reintegration work with people who will be subject to court-mandated supervision orders upon their release from custody. Probation Officers also conduct assessments for prisoners who are considered for the Community Return Scheme. In 2020, Probation Officers' primary work with clients was on a one to one basis. Group work with sex offenders and life sentenced prisoners was delivered in the first quarter of the year, but was suspended for most of the remainder of 2020 due to the pandemic restrictions.

Teams worked in a collaborative and creative way with Prison Management to ensure access to prisoners either through screened visits, video phone and video link, and also continued to engage with community based services to deliver a service to prisoners during the pandemic.

Working in Prisons during the COVID-19 Pandemic

During 2020 it remained business as usual for probation staff working in the prison settings, with several challenges presenting. From the onset of restrictions being imposed nationally

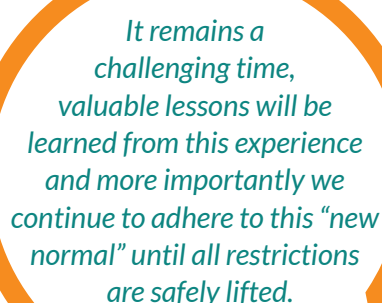


Pictured: Irene Christie, Sarah Finnegan, Phylis Joyce, Patrick Mullan and Kate Walshe, Prisons Team

to prevent the spread of Covid-19, the prison-based teams were identified as being an essential service and were rostered to safely manage the use of our offices. The priority for the Irish Prison Service was to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of prisoners in their care, and as part of their measures numbers in prison were reduced.

As a result, Probation Officers facilitated temporary releases to the community for PSSSO's and community return clients in particular. Community-based colleagues in the Probation Service played an essential role in this and were willing to take the clients from the prison on court orders with little notice. We worked closely with prison personnel to ensure our clients knew whom to contact on leaving the prison for supervision, as they could no longer just call into the office. The Prison based team also needed to adapt working practices and progressed to using videolink and videophones to engage with clients. Social distancing within

our offices remains vital, with the introduction of staggered team rotas to limit traffic and screened or distanced visits with clients. Self-care in terms of managing our health and wellbeing through distancing when in the office and indeed when accessing the prison has been and will continue to be maintained during 2021.



It remains a challenging time, valuable lessons will be learned from this experience and more importantly we continue to adhere to this “new normal” until all restrictions are safely lifted.

Restorative Justice

2020 has seen restorative justice interventions become further integrated into Probation supervision practice.

The Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit (RJVSU) supported colleagues in implementing restorative justice in forty cases, covering a range of offences with a significant number of cases arising from assaultive behaviour. Interventions have facilitated victims to voice their concerns and needs arising from the harm caused and to contribute to processes that aim to respond to those needs, and guide and inform the programme of rehabilitation. Preparation for victim-offender mediation began in 2020 in relation to some complex and serious offences that involved sexual violence and loss of life.

2020 also saw a shift to the use of online platforms to deliver restorative justice interventions. In July 2020, RJVSU joined with colleagues from throughout Europe in sharing the experience of undertaking restorative

justice in an environment where opportunities for face-to-face meetings were limited. These developments were important in relation to the existing needs but also in the context of future consideration for the appropriate and effective use of technology to facilitate victim - offender dialogue.

The RJVSU marked International Restorative Justice Week with a number of events including a virtual workshop that focused on learning from anonymised case studies. The RJVSU were joined by colleagues to review and discuss the application of restorative justice in relation to a number of offences ranging from animal cruelty to assault. Restorative justice dialogue provided the opportunity for offenders to better understand the harm their behaviour had caused, by hearing directly from victims in some cases. The cases also demonstrated the importance both of the process itself and the related actions in ‘making good’ that harm as part of the programme of rehabilitation.

In addition a webinar was held marking the International Restorative Justice Week, organised by members of the Irish group of the Restorative Justice: Strategies for Change European project in collaboration with the Department of Justice. The webinar was attended by over 160 guests including the Minister of State James Browne T.D., and officials from the Department of Justice. RJS4C project partners Ursula Fernée, Probation Service and Dr. Ian Marder from Maynooth Department of Law, discussed recent developments and the plans to increase the use of restorative justice in Ireland, along with an overview of the work, funded by the Department of Justice, to develop a dedicated restorative justice website, to be launched in early 2021.

Victim Services

The Probation Service responded to increased numbers of victim contacts in 2020. Staff in the RJVSU worked in creative and flexible ways to respond to victims’ queries and concerns.

Requests for clarification and information on the meaning and parameters of supervision were a recurring theme from those contacts.

A number of training and information sessions were delivered in 2020 by RJVSU staff and colleagues in Learning and Development Unit. The first of these sessions was held to coincide with European Victims of Crime Day in February. Joined by colleagues from our partner community based organisations, this two day event included inputs on legislative and policy developments, the impact of crime upon victims, and frameworks to better integrate the victim perspective into Probation Service practice.

A gender responsive approach to female offending.

The Probation Service Working Group on female offending, worked on-line throughout 2020 to support the delivery of effective practice interventions. The group brings together staff from a range of practice areas, to provide a richness of perspective taking that aim to inform a consistent and holistic response in meeting the needs of women on supervision. The group support a gender informed approach in working with women through the production of guidance documents in the area of assessment and supervision, active engagement with service users through various project initiatives and inputs to information and training events.

Young Persons Probation

Young Person Probation (YPP) is one of the seven defined regions of the Probation Service Operations Directorate. Young Person Probation was established in 2006 to meet the specific needs of young people and to fulfil the statutory obligation of the Children's Act 2001. As part of the work of the YPP Region, the Service provides an in-reach to Oberstown Detention Centre. The Probation Service prioritised young people as a special category throughout the pandemic. Probation staff continued to attend Children Courts, write reports for the Court and provide much needed support to children and their families.

In their role, YPP staff engage with young people, families (reaching into the homes) as well as collaborate with the community and voluntary sector, education providers and community based services

Two examples of on-going excellent interagency collaboration include: Youth- Joint Agency Response to Crime (YJARC) and National Inter Agency Prevention Programme (NIAPP).

Youth- Joint Agency Response to Crime (YJARC) is a multi-agency approach to manage and address the prolific offending and criminal behaviour of young persons aged 16 to 21 who have committed five or more offences. Two pilot projects were launched in 2017, to provide an operational approach for co-ordinated and enhanced levels of co-operation and co-ordination between An Garda Síochána, Probation Service, the Irish Prison Service, Oberstown Children Detention Campus, and Tusla. It aims to place the young person at the centre of the process; identify their needs, strengths and risks; and provide an inter-agency co-operation and co-ordinated response in addressing such needs and risks.

National Inter Agency Prevention Programme (NIAPP) Services provide training, consultation, assessment, and age appropriate intervention for children who exhibited sexually harmful behaviour. The multi-agency, multidisciplinary approach encompasses three strands of holistic treatment: child protection, mental health, and criminal justice. During 2020 Probation Officers co- facilitated two treatment programmes, delivered remotely, for young people who have exhibited sexually harmful behaviour or sexually offended.

SECTION

2

Connected and Trusted

Connected and Trusted

The Probation Service recognises that to achieve our vision of a safer and more inclusive Ireland we need to work with a range of stakeholders, including probation colleagues, criminal justice partners, service-users, and the wider community.

Probation Service – Strategy Statement 2021-2023 Developing our Strategy

Work began in Autumn 2020 on the development of the Probation Service Strategy Statement for the period 2021- 2023. An extensive consultation process commenced in September 2020 and ran over a period of months involving our staff, service users, the public and a wide range of stakeholders.

Covid-19 changed the usual means of communicating with our stakeholders and the Service adapted by using innovative methods such as, social media platforms and on-line surveys to seek the opinions of our stakeholders. This stakeholder consultation will provide rich and valuable input into the development of our new Strategy, which is expected to be published in the second quarter of 2021.

Strategic Alignment with our Criminal Justice partners

In November 2020 the Probation Service were invited by the Department of Justice to submit our views in relation to their proposed strategic priorities as part of the Department's stakeholder consultation on the development of its Strategy Statement for the period 2021-2023.

The Probation Service submitted a detailed submission to the Department of Justice highlighting areas of further interaction and engagement between both organisations to further embed our continued collaboration to achieve better outcomes for safer communities and reduce reoffending.

The Probation Service also contributed to the development of the inaugural Criminal Justice Sectoral Strategy 2021- 2023, which will increase collaborative working to deliver an enhanced service that meets the needs of those who come in contact with the criminal justice system.

Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027

Within the broader context of our work, the Probation Service welcomes and endorses the vision of the forthcoming Youth Justice Strategy 2021- 2027 for collaborative working across all sectors of government and society in the development and delivery of opportunities for vulnerable children and young people. In 2020 the Probation Service were pleased to be members of the Youth Justice Strategy Working group and to engage in consultations with the Department of Justice. As a Service we are dedicated to collaborative, interagency working to provide best outcomes for children and young people engaged with the Criminal Justice System. The Probation Service supports in full the objective of strengthening the capacities of children and young to live free from crime and harm.

Management of Offenders

The Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service third Joint Strategy was extended to cover the period up to end of 2020. The strategy has actions that cover the entire sentence, pre and post custody. It seeks to address many of the factors associated with prisoners offending, or likely to increase their chances of re-offending. An update on progress on the Strategy's strategic goals are detailed on Page 46.

PPAG Seminar

The 11th annual Public Protection Advisory Group (PPAG) seminar was held in virtual format on November 27th 2020. The event was hosted by the Probation Service. The seminar generated considerable interest and was a resounding success with over one hundred and forty people tuning in, from across the island of Ireland, the UK and from many countries around Europe. The aim of the annual event is to facilitate a forum for the exchange of perspectives and experiences for criminal justice agencies across Ireland.

The theme of the seminar was “*Emerging Needs North and South – Developing Criminal Justice Practice*”. The seminar opening addresses were given by Helen McEntee, Minister for Justice, Republic of Ireland and by Naomi Long, Minister of Justice, Northern Ireland.

The Director Mark Wilson co-chaired the seminar alongside Ms Cheryl Lamont, Chief Executive, Probation Board Northern Ireland, noting that the annual gathering provided a valuable opportunity for all in the criminal justice agencies, policy makers and practitioners to come together to enhance co-operation.

Minister McEntee noted that a cooperative, cross border approach results in better outcomes for all, and that by improving and coordinating the management of offenders, we can contribute a further reduction in crime and victimisation. The Minister added that



Pictured: Minister for Justice Helen McEntee TD



Pictured: Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland, Naomi Long

the seminar provides an opportunity for all to consider and share examples of innovative practice and partnership working.

The Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland noted the successful co-operation between both respective law enforcement agencies and that the excellent engagement between the criminal justice agencies will continue to be an important driver in maintaining peace on the island of Ireland.

The seminar showcased three topical and varied themes with joint presentations from the Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service on ‘*Working together to benefit Offenders and their Communities*’.

The Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Probation Service of Northern Ireland on ‘*Partnership Working Towards More Effective Resettlement*’, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland and An Garda Síochána on Cross Border



Pictured: Speakers at PPAG seminar

Partnership between both organisations in the area of *'Human Trafficking, Organised Prostitution and Modern Slavery'*.

Irish Probation Journal

Also on 27th November 2020, the 17th edition of the Irish Probation Journal was published. On the cusp of its third decade of publication, this edition also had the distinction of being published in a year with many personal and professional challenges caused by Covid-19. Two practice articles from the Services, North and South, provide an important overview and record of interventions at a time of unprecedented health and social crisis. The authors reflected on adjustments to procedures, the expanded use of technology, the challenges for worker/service user relationships and the personal impact of remote working.

In addition to three book reviews there are fourteen articles on a range of themes, including mental health, gender informed initiatives and community re-integration that draw from policy and practice developments and discuss findings from research. In keeping with established practice, the opening paper, based on the Annual Martin Tansey Memorial Lecture, provides a 'state of the art' review of the

evidence in relation to realistic goal setting and programme design to achieve better outcomes in reducing recidivism.

Working with our International Partners

The Confederation of European Probation (CEP) is the established European organisation for probation and the voice and leader for probation in Europe. CEP members come from the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe, and comprises organisations working in the field



Pictured: Gerry McNally, CEP President



Pictured: Ursula Fernée, Regional Manager speaking at the 'Writing for Publication Seminar', at Probation Headquarters, Haymarket in January, 2020

of probation, research and education bodies, researchers and interested individuals.

For the Confederation of European Probation (CEP), and Gerry McNally, the Probation Service representative and President, 2020 was a year of rapid change as the Covid-19 pandemic closed down international travel and events everywhere. CEP has had to restructure its work and move its planned 2020 programme of expert meetings, seminars, summer school, and other events online to support its members across Europe. Some events have been deferred until 2021.

CEP actively promoted information and knowledge sharing among its members and network in coping with the challenges in maintaining services. The CEP website provided a forum for the exchange of experience and mutual support during 2020 with many valuable contributions by Probation Service personnel. Probation Service representatives also participated in CEP expert group meetings on mental health, domestic and education and training among others.

In addition, the Probation Service continued its ongoing engagement, this year online, with colleagues in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Latvia, Sweden and across Europe. The Probation Service also continued active, also online, participation in international restorative justice and other partner bodies.

The Probation Service is committed to working with our international probation and criminal justice partners to further develop good probation practice and identifying opportunities for collaboration.

Council of Europe

The Probation Service continued to contribute to the work of Council of Europe bodies, specifically the Council for Penal Co-operation (PC-CP), in 2020. These contributions included data reports for the annual SPACE II publication on probation statistical analysis across Europe.

In addition, inputs were provided to the work of the PC-CP, particularly in relation to its work on mental health in probation, through Dr. Christina Power's new research on mental health among persons supervised by the Probation Service.

Social Enterprise

Social Enterprises are businesses whose core objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact, any surpluses generated are re-invested into achieving a social impact.

Covid-19 had a major impact on all sectors of society in 2020, including the Social Enterprise sector. While many Social Enterprises in Ireland had to close their doors throughout 2020, others pivoted their business model to meet the changing needs of their customers. Despite the challenging environment, work continued within the Probation Service on developing the Social Enterprise model of employment for people with convictions.

Kickstart Fund

In January 2020, the Probation Service, supported by the Irish Prison Service and Pobal, launched Round Two of the KickStart Fund. The purpose of the KickStart Fund is to support and provide employment opportunities in the social enterprise sector for those with a criminal past who find it difficult to access the labour market as a result. In providing this funding Social Enterprises will also benefit from investments in their business which will contribute to start-ups, growth, more profits and ultimately long term sustainability.

Round Two of KickStart made €1m available to social enterprises around the country. A total of twenty six organisations and Social Enterprises were successful in their application for funding.

Working to Change – Social Enterprise and Employment Strategy 2021 – 2023.

In November 2020, the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee T.D., launched the Department of Justice's 'Working to Change – Social Enterprise

and *Employment Strategy 2021 – 2023*. This strategy sets out ambitious targets to increase the employment options for people who have criminal records and builds on a strong foundation of supports already in existence.

The overarching theme of *Working to Change* is increasing access to employment opportunities for people with criminal convictions, it sets out a total of 46 inter-connected actions under three strategic areas of focus: (1) social enterprise employment options; (2) general employment options and (3) entrepreneurship.

The Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service actively support this Department of Justice led strategy to fulfil its goals. The Strategy will be delivered in collaboration with other Government Departments, criminal justice agencies and essential frontline services. The actions are aligned with a number of other national and international policies, with the focus of addressing crime and creating safer communities.

To assist with the implementation of the actions, a dedicated website was launched and can be accessed at: www.workingtochange.ie

Community Based Organisations

In 2020, the Probation Service funded 63 Community Based Organisation, to develop and deliver services to offenders in their communities. These organisations support the work of the Probation Service in working with persons who are under supervision by the Probation Service or at risk of becoming involved in crime.

The implementation of Covid restrictions during 2020, presented significant challenges for all our community organisations, their staff and their clients. The Probation Service would like to acknowledge the work of all our funded organisations, who continued to provide crucial and innovative supports to vulnerable persons throughout the period of the Covid 19 restrictions. We are confident that the

community organisations will continue to adapt, when we return to delivering full services, but some of the new processes and skills developed by the organisations will be incorporated in the their services and practices in the future.

The following is a snapshot of how some of our organisations went the extra mile to continue to provide services to their communities.

DEONACH Tallaght Probation Project – 2020 A Year of Covid

DEONACH/Tallaght Probation Project is based in Tallaght Village, providing programmes and services to both adults and young persons in South Dublin.

During Covid, DEONACH recognised the importance of the need to continue working with participants, and to safely reach out to them in their community. During 2020, DEONACH delivered over 420 education and care-packs, made over 2500 care calls, delivered over 900 food parcels to their most vulnerable participants and their families, and provided one to one support to all of their participants. The project has also continued to deliver education and well-being programmes including their QQI programmes. The project has stated that “We have not let Covid stop us from working, we have stayed open, and we are just working a little bit differently with our participants”.

WHAD

WHAD (We Have A Dream Project) is primarily based in the Ballyfermot/ Cherry Orchard area. The WHAD Project saw many challenges during the first few months of the Pandemic, noticing reduced engagement and interaction with many of their participants. The project rose to the challenge and has since made giant leaps in the engagement with young persons.

In accordance with the Covid guidelines, the project targeted the most vulnerable of its clients, carrying out one-to-one programmes to encourage pro-social activities and a reduction in offending behaviour. The Project has continued to operate outdoor pursuit's



programmes, working with probation officers and in conjunction with other probation funded community organisations, and has expanded its services into areas in the north of Dublin city, and also to other parts of South Dublin such as Tallaght and Dun Laoghaire.

Westview

Westview is a community based organisation, managed by Foróige, and based in Blackpool in Cork City. The project enables young people to make positive choices and to reduce their re-offending, by improving participation in their community, and promotes pro-social behaviour.

Since March 2020, the project has adapted and found innovative ways of working to engage young people. The organisation made significant investments in information technology systems, which enable it to move its appointments online and continue to facilitate regular programme work. The project supported young people through the stressful period of lockdown and offered online Music Lessons, online cooking lessons and delivery of meal packs for participants.

Westview recognising the significant challenges faced by its participants, has responded



through delivering online programmes that support mental health, and providing an Anger Management Programme to address increased tension in homes. The project has been able to offer support at times of distress to its young clients and also promote the use of better coping mechanisms.

Céim ar Chéim (Moyross Probation Project)

Céim ar Chéim (Moyross Probation Project) is an Education and Training Day Centre, situated in Moyross on the north side of Limerick City, catering for young persons.

The Covid Pandemic presented the organisation and the young people with many challenges. It



highlighted the digital divide, lack of devices, absence of wifi in homes etc. Young people also struggled with mental health issues due to isolation from friends, anxieties, lack of routine and structure. These challenges and others pushed the organisation to develop new ways of working, and the project provided digital technology to its staff and young persons.

This allowed Céim ar Chéim to develop digital platforms for remote and blended learning despite Covid restrictions. Ten young persons progressed in the Leaving Cert Applied Programme, twenty young persons obtained QQI qualifications, four young persons progressed to further education and four into employment. During the summer months a group of twelve young people completed the Leadership for Life Programme, with National University of Ireland, Galway, all graduating with first class honours. In addition, the project continued to provide crisis supports, key working and counselling services to address the challenges faced by our young people.

PACE

PACE is a community organisation in North Dublin that works with people with convictions for a wide range of criminal offences.

The Covid-19 pandemic had an immediate impact on the work undertaken by PACE, resulting in the project shutting down their training and social enterprise projects including The Mug Shot Coffee cart in the Four Courts. However, when it became apparent that it would not be a short-term lockdown, PACE developed a multi-layered response focussing



both on how they could protect staff and clients, while at the same time continuing to deliver services.

PACE's response enabled them to keep their residential accommodation centre in Priorswood House open and operating within Covid guidelines, albeit with reduced numbers. PACE's training and social enterprise activities also went online, and the project forged a partnership with ALONE whereby customers could order a flower planter for themselves plus donate one to ALONE. PACE also continued to operate its Prevention Service programmes (Foothold, Safer Lives, and Circles of Support and Accountability for higher risk clients throughout the year). Thanks to the resilience and creativity of the staff and participants, PACE was able to adapt and thrive during the pandemic.

Tus Nua



Tus Nua, funded by the Probation Service and the European Social Fund, provides women leaving prison and women referred from the community with a history of offending, with safe supported housing and a positive environment. One of the actions included in the Probation Service-Irish Prison Service Joint Strategic Plan 2018-2020 is the development of a range of responses for female offenders to afford them more opportunity and help them realise their potential. Each resident has their own room, access to communal space and the garden. Every woman is appointed a key worker and together they identify a support plan for their stay which covers life skills, budgeting, alcohol harm reduction, detox access, and physical and mental health support. The support offered also includes learning life skills and identifying opportunities to help assist residents to live independently upon leaving Tus Nua. Twenty eight women availed of Tus Nua services in 2020.

International Women's Day



Probation Service Event to mark International Women's Day in March 2020

Prior to the first "lockdown" the Probation Service was delighted to host what proved to be a very stimulating and joyful event to mark International Women's Day 2020. Probation Staff were joined by participants and staff from three community based organisations, Saol, Tus Nua and Outlook, all of whom provide dedicated day and residential services to support women. Interactive presentations were delivered over coffee through word, poetry and dance.

There was an opportunity to learn about the activities in each of the programmes and to hear of the achievements of the women, demonstrating their courage and creativity in facing personal and social adversity. The conversation was open and honest, at times sad and sometimes humorous.

*The shared voices
and the peer to peer
learning supported further
reflection on, and the
commitment to, the theme
for this year's campaign
"Each for Equal".*

SECTION

3

People Centred

People Centred

The Probation Service is a people-centred organisation. It believes that with the assistance of our knowledgeable, skilled and committed staff, acting as change agents, our service users have the capacity to change their behaviour and become better citizens.

Covid-19 Return to Work

Many of our offices closed during the early weeks of the initial lockdown period and staff adjusted to the new experience of remote working. From May 2020 onwards, we worked tirelessly with our colleagues in the Department of Justice, and the Office of Public Works to implement the Return to Work Safely Protocol. Staff returned to work on a phased and rostered basis, to facilitate client interviews and other essential work.

Returning staff were welcomed back to the workplace having been fully prepared for their return with a personal induction from our Health and Safety Unit on their first day back.

While we often wondered what we did before Covid matters took over our daily lives, the work we put in during this time paid dividends in ensuring a safe return to the workplace for our staff.

Appointment of new Director, Mark Wilson

Mr Mark Wilson took up his appointment as Director of the Probation Service on the 20 July 2020, taking over from Ita Burke, Director of Corporate Affairs, who served as interim Director since earlier this year.

"The new Director is bringing his extensive experience and skills to bear to make further improvements to the Service, in partnership with others in the criminal justice sector. This partnership and cross-agency approach is critical and underpins the Joint Agency Response to Crime and other cross agency key areas of collaboration"
quote from Minister Flanagan.

A qualified social worker, Mark Wilson has previously held positions in the Irish Prison Service (as Deputy Director of Operations) and in the Probation Service. During his earlier periods in the Probation Service, he contributed to the setting up of both the Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management (SORAM) and the Joint Agency Response to Crime (JARC) models of joint offender management. Most recently he has served as a Principal Officer in the Department of Justice International Protection Accommodation Service

I am deeply honoured to take up the position of Director of the Probation Service. I know how effective community sanctions can be to reduce crime and help rebuild lives. I look forward to working closely with the team in the Probation Service to deliver on our mandate and contribute to the broader work of the Department of Justice in creating a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland

Communication

One edition of the external newsletter and three editions of the internal newsletters were published in 2020. These newsletters provided an insight into the work of the Probation Service during 2020 and primarily due to Covid-19 had a shift in content as planned events for 2020 had to move to virtual platforms.

Throughout the year we issued regular communications to staff about the supports available to them through the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service and also the Probation Service Employee Assistance Programme and Counselling Service, which is now provided by Laya Healthcare. All of this

information was made readily available on a newly created Covid 19 folder on the Portal to provide a central source for all staff to access information and guidance.

Recruitment

The arrival of Covid-19 in Ireland briefly interrupted our recruitment campaign for new Probation Officers earlier in the year. As we all became more accustomed to working on-line, we were able to proceed with the selection process, in May 2020, a panel of potential Probation Officers was set up from which a total of twenty three officers were appointed by the end of the year. The new Officers were assigned to various locations across the Country filling important gaps and helping to maximise our front line service delivery.

There are many Administrative staff of various grades working in the Service in all of the Services offices and across the Prison Teams. These staff provide considerable support to their Probation colleagues across many aspects of their work. A number of our Administrative colleagues were successful in promotion competitions whilst others took up mobility opportunities to other areas within the Department of Justice. For all of this to happen, for the essential gaps to be filled and moves to be facilitated, the Probation Service HR Unit

continued on an almost daily basis it's very effective liaison with Human Resources Division, in the Department of Justice.

Retirements

We also bade farewell to a number of long-serving colleagues throughout the year. A total of nine staff retired. Unfortunately due to Covid-19, their departures were very low key events, some of which were celebrated on line. Regretfully, it was not possible to hold our annual get-together for retired staff in 2020 but look forward to when we have the opportunity to meet up again.

Wellbeing

The Probation Service is committed to promoting the Wellbeing of all our staff, right across the organisation. At the end of 2019, we set up a Wellbeing Committee to promote awareness of Wellbeing and to put a plan in place for a number of initiatives for 2020.



The first of these, a four week Steps Challenge took place in January. This proved to be a fun, interactive and competitive challenge with the



Pictured: Irish Heart Week Coffee morning with staff from Cork Street Probation Office in February 2020

winning team walking close to five million steps over the four week period.

Other activities continued in the early months of 2020, including lunch-time Pilates, Basketball, our JustSing Choir rehearsals, and after-work Tag Rugby. Unfortunately, these activities came to an abrupt end in early March as the Covid-19 pandemic gripped the world.

Our focus then changed from organising activities to providing support and information for staff as they faced into the uncharted territory of remote working, not being able to meet colleagues and clients in person, home schooling, – and of course, the world of Zoom!

As we all adjusted to the 'new normal', the Wellbeing Committee regrouped and joined with the JustBe Wellbeing Team in the Department of Justice to provide online information webinars for staff on a variety of topics as well as some online fitness classes for the more energetic amongst us.

We held a very successful Halloween Competition (both Art and Written) for the children of staff across the country and on 23 December 2020 they had a 'virtual' visit from Santa, who chatted with them, read a story, let them know that they were all on the 'nice' list and could expect a visit from him on Christmas Eve.

Public Sector Duty (Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014)

Consistent with our core values, the Probation Service is committed to meeting our obligations under the Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014.

Section 42 of that Act establishes a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of all those with whom they engage, staff, service-users and stakeholders alike.



**Coimisiún na hÉireann
um Chearta an Duine
agus Comhionannas**
Irish Human Rights and
Equality Commission

In 2020, several actions under the Service's Public Sector Duty Action Plan were progressed including the following:

- ▲ Supervision of people on Probation continued to be delivered in accordance with the identified level of risk and need, ensuring our interventions remain equitable and proportionate.
- ▲ Continued to deliver services focused on the needs of female offenders
- ▲ Work continued to create opportunities for persons with a criminal conviction, through the development of the social enterprise model of employment.
- ▲ Training on Intercultural Awareness Training through Zoom. This gave participants an understanding of cultural diversity and the importance of having such insight and awareness in everyday work.
- ▲ The development of a new "Core Probation Skills Handbook" emphasised the issue of responsivity to optimise engagement and recognition that persons under our supervision are all different, are distinguished in many ways such as their cognitive abilities, emotionality, backgrounds, communication style etc. Newly recruited Probation Officers were the first group to receive this new training in 2020.
- ▲ Human Resources continued to raise awareness on the role of the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) and link with the Dept's DLO network. Work continued on reviewing the Probation estate with regard to disability access. Flexible working arrangements were enhanced, relevant policies were identified and made accessible to staff.



SECTION

4

Learning Organisation

Learning Organisation

We will remain informed about the best empirical evidence of what is effective probation practice, and take appropriate measures to incorporate new learning into our work, creating a culture of continuous learning and reflective practice.

Learning & Development Unit

2020 heralded a massive transformation in how the Learning and Development Unit (L & D) carries out its business. The Covid-19 pandemic catalysed somewhat of a learning and training revolution in the Probation Service, leading to the traditional face to face training model being replaced by on-line methods, with technology playing a vital role.

The L&D Unit had to move training wholesale into a virtual environment and had to modify the content and style of training to suit this very different delivery method. Although these challenges have been formidable the L&D unit has responded with positivity and innovation. The so called 'on-line pivot' which is the process of moving learning events on-line using virtual platforms, required staff in the Unit to quickly learn and become proficient in the use of on-line platforms and tools such as Zoom, Padlet and



Learning and Development team.

Loom, software previously unheard of by many of us.

As 2020 progressed staff in the L&D Unit gained confidence and experience in using these virtual platforms and tools and were designing and delivering an extensive selection of virtual training events to meet the on-going learning needs of the Service. Moreover, practitioner trainers in spite of having to manage the challenges that their everyday work presented and, having to upskill and adapt to on-line training methods, continued to support the L&D Unit in delivering training in their respective fields. In 2020 the L&D Unit delivered and facilitated 59 training/learning events on wide range of topics, examples of which are outlined below.

Examples of General and Specific Offender Intervention Training

STORM (skills based model of self-harm mitigation training)	Court Room Skills/ Managing Non Compliance
Understand Human Sexuality and Theories of Sexual Offending	Coercive Control/ Domestic Violence
Writing for Publication Workshop	The Risk Module: Understanding Risk and Criminal Justice
Training for New Managers	Intercultural Awareness Training
Understanding and Responding to Victims	Social Work Student Induction Programme with shared learning events such as virtual visits to community based organisations
Restorative Justice Workshop	Induction Programme for newly appointed Probation Officers
Supervising Staff Remotely	

Training in Standardised Risk Assessment Tools in 2020

Stable and Acute 2007 - full training Joint PS & AGS Training	PS/ROSH & PS/ROSH(SO) - full training
Risk Matrix 2000 - full training	Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) - refresher Training
LSI-R - full training	YLS CMI- refresher training

Induction Programme for Probation Officers

In early December 2020 the Learning & Development Unit commenced the first virtual Induction Programme for twenty two newly appointed Probation Officers. Over a period of three weeks, the Unit delivered and facilitated a combination of didactic and skills based learning initiatives, covering a broad range of topics and including inputs from the different operational and corporate functions of the Service.

Given that this programme was being delivered on-line meant that the usual contact and social engagement that takes place between participants during face to face training events was absent. As a way of addressing this the L&D Unit designed the programme in such a way as to maximise interaction during sessions and set up a number of small pods to encourage engagement between participants and for peer support. In addition, all new Probation Officers were allocated a mentor for the duration of the induction programme to ensure that they

were supported in their learning and in their emotional and social needs. Whilst the phased induction programme was challenging to co-ordinate and deliver on-line, and within a three-week timeframe, the feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive.

Intercultural Awareness Training

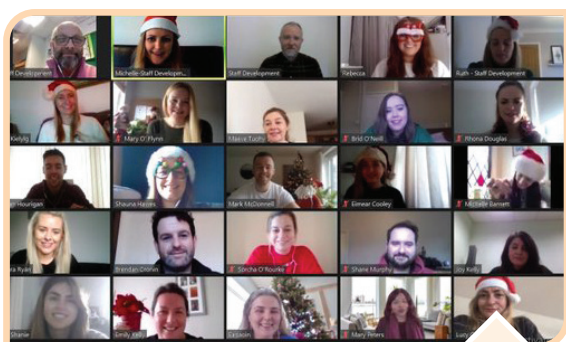
From September 2020 to December 2020 Intercultural Awareness Training was delivered in twelve sessions to over 120 staff members, across all grades. This training was delivered virtually as part of the Get Real initiative. Get Real is a three year European Union Peace-IV funded project that was launched in January 2018. The Get Real project partners are Probation Board NI, Police Service of NI, Irish Probation Service, Victim Support NI and South Belfast Roundtable. The project aims to challenge hate crime, behaviour and attitudes. The sessions on Intercultural Awareness focused on giving participants an insight into what culture/cultural diversity is, why cultural awareness is important, things to consider when working with individuals from other cultures and potential areas for misunderstanding. The training was very interactive and participatory and feedback from participants was very positive.

Mental Health

The Mental Health Working Group continued to deliver further actions as part of the Service's ongoing commitment in this area of work. The Learning and Development unit facilitated on-line delivery of STORM (skills based model of self-harm mitigation training) to front line staff.

Informal Learning & Development:

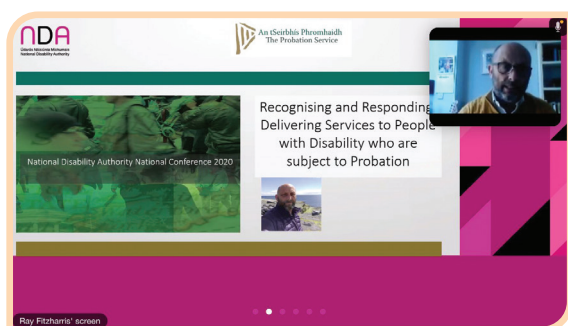
The L&D Unit hosted a number of virtual 'Brunch & Learn' events during the year. These events provide an opportunity for staff to hear people from both inside and outside of the Service speak and share their knowledge and experiences on a range of issues and themes. In October representatives from the Garda National Protective Services Bureau, Child Exploitation Unit, shared knowledge and expertise with staff in the area of Internet Sexual Offending. In November the School of



Pictured: Newly recruited Probation Officers attending online Induction Programme

Social Work & Social Policy, UCD presented on the topic of Restorative Justice and its use as a response to serious sexual crime. Both events were very well attended and generated debate and stimulating discussion between colleagues.

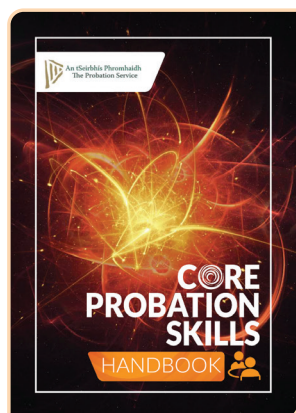
The L&D Unit also facilitated a number of staff members to attend on-line seminars and conferences, in particular, the NOTA series of on-line training sessions focusing on current issues and practices related to understanding and responding to sexual abuse.



In addition, the Probation Service presented at the Annual National Disability Authority Conference which was hosted on-line in October 2020. The title of the presentation was 'Recognising & Responding: Delivering Services to People with Disability who are subject to Probation'.

Core Probation Skills Handbook

In 2020 the Learning & Development Unit developed and launched the Core Probation Skills Handbook. The handbook has been developed to support the implementation of the Offender Supervision Framework, a bespoke, evidence informed, step by step practice model. The handbook is primarily but not exclusively, for Probation



Officers and can be used as a guidance document, a reference and a material resource, from first client contact through to case closure. The handbook focuses on core probation skills, that research suggests if utilised consistently by Probation Officers have the potential to reduce recidivism. It sets out six core probation skills – *relationship building skills; role clarification; pro-social modelling and reinforcement; cognitive behavioural interventions; problem solving and motivational interviewing.*

To support staff in using these core skills the L&D Unit designed and developed an associated training module. This training module uses a multimodal delivery method and makes use of a number of virtual programmes and tools. It involves pre-session guided work, in session work and post session tutorials. Newly inducted staff, were the first to be trained in Core Probation Skills as part of their induction programme. All Probation Officers are expected to undertake training in Core Probation Skills and the training will be rolled out throughout 2021.

The Criminal Justice Cross Sector Leadership Programme

The Criminal Justice Strategic Committee, in partnership with Criminal Justice agencies across the Justice Sector, launched the first Criminal Justice Cross Sector Senior Leadership Programme in 2017. This programme is run in conjunction with the Institute of Public Administration.

The fourth iteration of this programme commenced in Autumn 2020 with two members of the Probation Service Senior Management team selected to participate. The Probation Service has been an active supporter of this innovative learning opportunity since it began and were delighted to have ongoing participation by our staff members in the class of 2020. The overall aim of the Programme is to assist participants in developing and applying the skills necessary to drive future co-operation in the criminal justice system.

International Collaboration

As part of our ongoing commitment to share our experience and assist practice development in other jurisdictions, the Probation Service hosted a visit of staff from the Czech Republic Probation and Mediation Service. We were fortunate to be able to host this visit before the outbreak of the pandemic. The group were all specialists working with young offenders and received presentations from the Learning & Development Unit, the Restorative Justice & Victim Services Unit, An Garda Síochána, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs as well as Young Person Probation staff. The Czech Service have been generous in their praise for the content and organisation of the visits and the positive learning experience it has provided for their staff.



Pictured: Staff from Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic in February 2020

The CSO Probation Service Reoffending Statistics Study

The CSO Probation Service Re-offending Statistics measures the level of recorded re-offending by offenders that were placed under the management of the Probation Service. The re-offending rate indicates the percentage of people who were reconvicted for a crime incident that was recorded within a defined period (re-offence window) following the commencement of their Probation, Community Service or Post Release Supervision Order. The conviction must be within two years of the date that incident was recorded.

The latest Probation Service Re-offending Study

was published by the Central Statistics Office in November 2020. The focus of the Study was on the 2014, 2015 and 2016 cohorts. The period under consideration differs for each cohort under the supervision of the Probation Service. A three-year period is considered for the 2014 cohort, a two-year period for the 2015 cohort and a one-year period for the 2016 cohort.

A new area of study was introduced for the 2016 cohort involving a custodial indicator. The re-offenders were classified by Probation re-offence type and if that re-offence resulted in a custodial or non-custodial sentence

Key highlights:

- ▲ Over 52% of the 2014 cohort did not re-offend within 3 years compared to 45.4% of the 2008 cohort that did not re-offend.
- ▲ Most of the re-offence takes place within a year of sentencing and of those 64.1% re-offend within the first 6 months.
- ▲ There is an inverse relationship between age and reoffending levels. Of the 2016 cohort, 45.6% of under 18s re-offend within 1 year of receiving a supervision order. In contrast 21.7% of over 65s re-offend within the same period.
- ▲ Males remain marginally more likely to reoffend (30.3%) compared to females (30%).
- ▲ The highest rate of re-offending within a year was by individuals committed to supervision for theft and related offences (39.1%)
- ▲ The three main re-offence types are Public Order and Social code offences (28.5%), followed by Theft and Related Offences (24.4%) and Controlled Drug Offences (16.3%).
- ▲ 50.6% of individuals of the 2016 cohort who re-offended received a custodial penalty and 49.4% received a non-custodial penalty.
- ▲ Individuals with re-offences relating to Burglary and Related Offences are more likely to receive a custodial sentence (66.7%), followed by Fraud, Deception and Related Offences (62.5%). In contrast 39.2% of re-offences relating to Dangerous or Negligent Acts received a custodial sanction.

The full publication is available on the Central Statistics Office's website

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-prs/probationre-offendingstatistics2016/>

Research

The Probation Service Research Strategy reflects the Service's commitment to being a learning organisation and affirms the valuable contribution that research and evaluation makes in helping the Probation Service work better, enhance our engagement with the research community and contribute to the criminal justice knowledge base.

During 2020, the Probation Service Research Committee worked closely with researchers, research bodies and third level education institutions, where practicable and feasible, to develop and facilitate post-graduate research proposals and projects. The Covid-19 Pandemic proved to be a major obstacle in progressing field studies and interviews. Researchers and students have been resilient, and have met the new reality with flexibility and creativity that has been invaluable in maintaining our shared commitment to scientific enquiry and evaluation. The Committee continued to meet throughout 2020 to consider applications to conduct research in the Probation Service.

Dr Jane Mulcahy was awarded her PhD at University College Cork in 2020 for *Connected Corrections and Corrected Connections: post-release supervision of long sentence male prisoners*. Dr. Mulcahy completed her research study at the Cork Alliance Centre with funding through an Irish Research Council Employment based PhD programme award, and support by the Probation Service. Her study is an important contribution to informing the work of the Probation Service and improving the integration and resettling of prisoners after release.

During 2020 the Probation Service participated in the Unlocking Potential Advisory Board. Unlocking Potential, led by Maynooth University and funded by the Public Sector Innovation Fund 2020, has created a valuable 'toolkit' for 3rd level education centres to guide and support development of admissions policies and practices for people with convictions. The

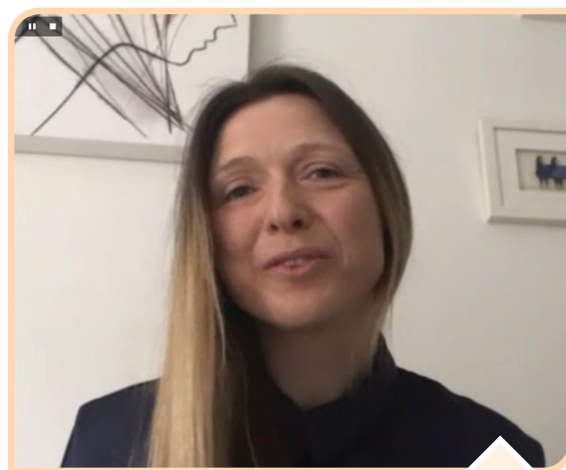
initiative was selected as one of the Innovation Fund winning projects across the Justice Sector.

The Probation Service has also contributed to research meetings and planning in the Department of Justice supporting the objectives and actions of the Department of Justice and Equality Data and Research Strategy 2018-2020.

The Probation Service is committed to building its research capacity as well as leading and partnering researchers and research organisations to inform future developments and support evidence informed decision making in probation practice.

Mental Health - Mental health among persons subject to Probation Service Supervision in Ireland (Probation Service Research Report)

Throughout 2020 work continued on the above mental health research studies, led by Dr. Christina Power, Senior Clinical Psychologist, supported by Professor Charlie Brooker and the Probation Service Mental Health Working Group. Building on three studies completed in 2019, a summary paper was published in the Irish Probation Journal 2020. In addition, to mark World Mental Health Day, 9th October 2020, Dr. Power presented her key findings via a virtual zoom event to front line probation staff and managers.



Pictured: Dr. Christina Power, Senior Clinical Psychologist



SECTION

5

Efficient and Accountable

Efficient and Accountable

The Probation Service is an agile and resilient organisation, with structures and processes to support the attainment of organisational goals, promote good governance and ensure we remain accountable for the work we do.

Oversight and Governance Arrangements

The Probation Service ensures that oversight of our administration follows the requirements set out for all Public Bodies in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). As part of governance practice the Probation Service, with the Department of Justice, has put in place an Oversight Agreement 2020 – 2022 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2020.

This Oversight Agreement 2020 - 2022, which is published on the Department's website, sets out the broad governance and accountability framework within which the Probation Service operates and defines key roles and responsibilities that underpin the relationship between the Department and the Probation Service. This is a three year agreement but in accordance with the Code of Practice it is reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

The Performance Delivery Agreement sets out the Probation Service's key targets for 2020 (in the context of the resource inputs provided) and how their delivery will be measured in terms of performance targets/indicators. It also highlights any potential risk factors.



The Probation Service's compliance with the requirements of the Agreement is monitored through at least three formal Governance meetings per year between the Department and the Probation Service. There is also continuous less formal interactions in accordance with business needs and mutual commitments of each party.

A Compliance Statement for 2019, which includes a statement of internal controls, in respect of the Probation Service in relation to matters set out at paragraph 1.9 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies – Business and Financial Reporting Requirements published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, was submitted to Minister Flanagan in June 2020. Appendix 2 sets out the Statement on the Probation Service System of Internal Controls for 2020.

The Probation Service has a risk register which is formally appraised by the Probation Service Risk Management Committee, who meet at least three times per annum. The risk register is also reviewed as part of normal business monitoring and planning arrangements. This ongoing and embedded monitoring of the risk management process is supported by progress reports to the Director of the Probation Service and the Executive Leadership Team. The Probation Service Risk Management Policy was updated and approved in December 2020.

The Probation Service confirms that it adheres to the relevant aspects of the Spending Code and has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement policy and guidelines and confirms that during 2020 these were complied with.

Business Support and Development.

The Business Support and Development remit covers a wide remit of responsibilities including communications, data and information management, ICT development, research and the organisation's Learning and Development unit alongside the preparation for and implementation of the Offender Supervision Framework. The Directorate continued to have a busy year in 2020 with work progressing in all key areas.

The Information Unit co-ordinates and manages information requests relating to Freedom of Information (FOI), Data Protection, and other information requests. The unit works closely with the Data Protection Compliance and Support Unit, of the Department of Justice, in terms of guidance, policies and procedures.

The management and preparation of responses as required to Parliamentary Questions, Ministerial Representations and other information requests continued across Directorates in partnership with the Department of Justice Transparency Unit.

Ongoing work continued in 2020 to develop the Probation Service website, and the Twitter account was maintained to enhance communication with the public and key stakeholders. These important platforms highlighted the ongoing work and key achievements of the Probation Service throughout the year, in particular how the Service had to adapt rapidly to the challenges of the pandemic, whilst continuing to deliver front line services.

2020 Information Requests

Information Access Requests Received 2020	
Freedom of Information	18
Data Protection	3
Third Party Requests	12
Other Requests outside of FOI / DP	14
Total	47

Information Requests coordinated centrally

Press Queries	5
Dáil Questions	24
Other*	58
Total	87

*(Includes responses to representations from public representatives, requests for input to policy documents etc.)

Information Management and Technology (IM&T)

The Probation Services IM&T requirements are provided through the Department of Justice's IM&T Shared Services. A Service Level Agreement signed in July 2019 sets out the agreed systems and services which are in place to support the Operational business of the Probation Service. There is on-going liaison with IM&T both on the business as usual pieces and on proposed developments going forward.

Throughout 2020, we worked closely with IM&T to ensure the business and operations of the Probation Service were supported particularly in moving to working with probation clients remotely. The initial focus when the Country went into lock down was to enable as many Probation staff work remotely as a matter of priority. Many staff across the country were provided with laptops and desktops as quickly as possible to enable remote and agile working.

Probation offices had remained open throughout for essential business including video links with IM&T supporting this continuity of service. The availability of video links were critical to the completion of reports for those in custody. With the phased return to offices and return to face to face interviews with priority clients, support continued to be available – covering the laptops, desktops, telephones and video conferencing facilities. For business as usual queries and assistance the IM&T helpdesk was available to staff working remotely

Towards the latter part of the year, the Probation Service commenced the rollout of

new phones to Probation Officers and Senior Probation Officers to facilitate secure remote working and engagement with clients on their caseloads.

A key priority area for 2020 was investment in ICT systems to enable an agile and flexible workplace necessary for managing our work during Covid-19 and to ensure we meet our public safety responsibilities.

The aim for 2021 is to ensure that all Probation Officers have the IM&T supports and equipment to facilitate a more agile work force and blended approach in allowing staff undertake their operational role. In preparation for this the Service commenced the process of rolling out Service laptops to all Probation Officers. This will be part of the Probation Officers 'tool kit' going forward.

Both the APEX and Business Process Group met on a regular basis to discuss suggested enhancements and developments to ensure efficiency continuity of our operational systems.

Data Management

The Probation Service acknowledges the value of quality data, statistics, and subsequent analysis to inform and support the delivery of quality frontline services. In 2020, point in time statistics continue to be available on the Probation Service website www.probation.ie on the 1st of each month. Statistical data informs service priorities in terms of the allocation of resources. The Service contributed to the Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics – Persons Serving Non-Custodial Sanctions and Measures 2020 (SPACE II questionnaire) which sought data on persons under supervision of Probation Agencies at the 31st January 2020 whilst also looking at the flow of data for 2019. Statistics were also provided as required for response to Parliamentary Questions and Press Queries.

Estate

The Probation Service has over thirty-five offices in the community as well as offices in each of the prisons. The Service also avails of 'contact' offices in various locations nationwide in order to manage and supervise many clients in remote and rural areas.

The Estate and Facilities Unit liaised on an on-going basis with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and Probation Service Regional Managers on the management of Probation Service Estate and Facilities, and this was particularly more evident in the context of Covid- 19 prevention and control measures, working in tandem with Health and Safety.

During 2020, the OPW also sourced alternative accommodation for the Probation Service in Drogheda and plans are at an advanced stage to move into this new accommodation in early 2021.

Work continued on the new Probation Service facility in Mulgrave Street, Limerick which will provide modern accommodation for our Limerick Team and their clients. The Office of Public Works (OPW) have been overseeing the project on behalf of the Service.

Health and Safety

In early 2020, the Probation Service published a new Health and Safety Manual and Safety Statement and commenced working on reviewing all Health and Safety Policies and Guidance documents for the Service. Health and Safety is always critical for the Probation Service and is on the agendas for all Team, Regional and Management meetings.

With the onset of Covid-19, the big focus was to ensure all our Probation offices, work and interview spaces were safe for staff to work in and safe for our clients. Initially all offices were closed for a short period from March. A phased return to Working Safely commenced with all Offices across the country being risk assessed with Covid-19 in mind. Once the



Pictured: Reception area in Probation Headquarters, Haymarket

risk assessment was completed and submitted, identified Covid-19 prevention and control measures were put in place. Arrangements were made locally for all maintenance checks which may have stalled to be completed as a matter of urgency. This included checks on air conditioning and ventilations systems, fire safety and access systems.

At all times the Probation Service linked in with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and were cognisant of Public Health Guidelines.

Offices logged calls locally with OPW and arranged for the installation of screens and sneeze guards in interview spaces and at reception spaces where required. Additional cleaning including touchpoint cleaning was arranged. Sanitisers were placed at entry and exits of all offices. Rosters were put in place for each Team. Social distancing signage was sourced and placed in all offices with posters displayed raising awareness of the signs and



Pictured: Interview room Cork Probation Office

symptoms of Covid-19 and promoting good hygiene etiquette.

Together with the Health and Safety Unit, staff in all of our offices nationally worked collaboratively to ensure offices were set up to allow for a safe return to face to face work.

In line with Government recommendations the Service sought nominations from staff for

the position of Lead Worker Representatives (LWR) in each of our offices. There was a great response to this call out nationally. All LWR's received training in what the role entails and have embraced the role which provides for a collaborative approach to managing our Covid-19 control measures. In addition Regional LWR's have been appointed in each of the Operational Regions. All staff returning to work have met with local Managers and completed checklists to confirm their awareness of Covid-19 and of changes in emergency procedures in the context of reduced persons on site at any given time. Face to face meetings recommenced with identified clients on an appointment only basis, once agreed control measures were in place.

The Health and Safety folder on the portal was kept up to date at all times with staff having easy access to protocols and standard operating procedures. In addition, a Covid-19 folder was created on the front portal with access to all Covid-19 Protocols and Guidance documents including those on the Human Resources and Service Delivery sides. Regular updates and communications issued to all staff keeping them informed of any changes and reminding them of the need to be vigilant and adhere to our control measures at all times.

The Health and Safety Unit also worked closely with the Community Service Unit with a view to sites recommencing once out of lock down. Community Service Site Risk Assessments were comprehensively reviewed and plans put in place for as safe return with appropriate controls and safeguards in place.

Covid-19 Health and Safety meetings were held weekly throughout the year with the Service linking in directly with the Health and Safety Manager in the Department of Justice. At all times the Probation Service had regard to the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and also the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). The Services

National Health and Safety Committee which has representatives from across the Grades and Regions reconvened and met virtually in December 2020.

The Service continued to report all incidents/accidents in a timely fashion to the State Claims Agency and maintained links with the Network during the year. Health and Safety training provided during 2020 included training for Safety Officers, Fire Wardens, First Aiders, and also Manual Handling Training.

Energy

The Annual Report for the Sustainability Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) shows that the Probation Service have achieved a savings of 20.4 % on the 2009 baseline figures. This is an improvement on the previous year of 7 %. It is likely that this may have been impacted by the pandemic. As a Service, we continued to link in regularly with the SEAI and with the Office of Public Works (OPW) in managing our Energy consumption. Particularly for Headquarters, in Haymarket, working with them in Optimising Power @ Work.

The Energy Report in respect of the Haymarket for end of 2020 shows a decrease of Energy consumption of 59% since joining the Optimising Power @ Work campaign in 2010.

Procurement

The Probation Service continues to monitor purchasing expenditure, review purchasing requirements and consolidate the purchasing of goods and services to ensure better value for money.

During 2020 we continued to avail of contracts placed centrally by the Office of Government Procurement, centralised framework agreements and tender arrangements made available through the Department of Justice and its Agencies.

Meeting Our Children First Requirements.

As a Relevant Service under Children First Act 2015, child safeguarding remained a priority for the Probation Service during 2020. Four “Always Children First” foundation training sessions were delivered face to face, by our Children First trainers, during the first quarter of 2020. The Children First e-learning programme continued to be facilitated by the Probation Service during 2020. It is intended that a number of “Always Children First” foundation training workshops will be delivered during 2021. It is anticipated that these workshops will be delivered on-line in collaboration with Tusla trainers. Children First training aims to ensure that staff are aware of their role and responsibilities in respect of child safeguarding.



The Probation Service's current Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed in all of our offices around the country.

Protected Disclosures

The Probation Service has signed up with the Integrity at Work Programme, which is operated by Transparency International (TI) Ireland since 2017. This membership arrangement was put in place to support compliance with the Protected Disclosures Act, 2014 and ensure a consistent approach to protected disclosures.

In 2020, three Managers attended an online training event on Dealing with Protected Disclosures delivered by Transparency International.

During 2020, there was one confirmed Protected Disclosure related to the Probation Service.

TARGETS

Throughout the year the Service measured its performance against its strategic goals outlined in the Probation Service Strategy Statement 2018-2020 and against the work mapped out in the Service workplans. The following outlines progress in some of the key areas for 2020:

GOAL	PROGRESS
EVIDENCE INFORMED PRACTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Core Probation Skills Handbook completed and published. ▲ Offender Supervision Framework implementation phase terms of reference agreed. ▲ Training to upskill staff in use of appropriate risk assessment tools continued. ▲ Continued focus on gender informed responses to working with female offenders across all aspects of the Service. ▲ Risk assessment instrument to assess risk of re-offence amongst child pornography offenders identified in pilot. ▲ Preparation of Risk based Workload Agreement implementation underway. ▲ Covid Operational Guidelines adapted.
CONNECTED AND TRUSTED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Continued participation in sub-groups arising from Criminal Justice Strategic Committee. ▲ Joint Community Return protocols between Probation Service and Irish Prison Service and actions in relation to substance misuse in progress. ▲ 'Working to Change' Social enterprise and Employment Strategy (2021-2023) launched. ▲ Kick Start 1 evaluation completed, Kick Start 2 application process completed and Kick start 3 work in progress. ▲ National Drug strategy actions progressed. ▲ Community Based Organisation's (CBO) funding allocations for 2021 agreed. ▲ Evaluation of Youth Joint Agency Response to Crime (YJARC) tender agreed. ▲ High level group convened to deliver on 2020 Probation Service commitments identified under Action Plan for Joint Management of Offenders 2019-2021. ▲ Criminal Justice (Mutual Recognition of Probation Judgements and Decisions) Act 2019 preparatory arrangement complete and in place. ▲ Continued participation in CEP working group regarding ongoing operational arrangements for EFD 947 in European member states including the operation of the PONT project. ▲ The 2020 Irish Probation Journal published.

GOAL	PROGRESS
PEOPLE CENTRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Intercultural awareness training delivered to staff across the Service to progress actions identified in the Probation Service Public Sector Duty action plan 2020. ▲ Annual 16 Days of Action awareness raising event opposing gender based violence held ▲ Evaluation of 'Choices' Domestic Violence programme work in progress. ▲ Participated on National Oversight Committee for Reducing Harm/ Supporting Recover in relation to strategic responsibilities ▲ Participated in Drug related intimidation and violence steering Committee. ▲ Domestic violence policy guidelines revised and progressed. ▲ Wellbeing Committee organised events for staff though the year including 'Health & Safety' Wellbeing Week' in November. ▲ Key Organisational Developments published on the website and on twitter. ▲ Child Safe guarding review complete and sent to TUSLA for review. ▲ Child safeguarding Training Strategy development completed.
LEARNING ORGANISATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Core Probation skills Handbook completed and associated training module in place. ▲ Probation Service Research Group work ongoing. ▲ A Probation Service Evaluation of Mental Health and Wellbeing among Probationers in Ireland research study completed. ▲ Report on 'Drugs and Alcohol Misuse' study being finalised. ▲ On-going collaboration with third level institutions in relation to student placements using hybrid model. ▲ Continued to facilitate social work student placements and to provide academic inputs into social work courses in a number of educational establishments. ▲ Core Probation skills Handbook completed, missed mode training module designed and training delivery commenced.
EFFICIENT AND ACCOUNTABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ HUB project work ongoing. ▲ Business case (POP) for new Case Tracking System submitted to the Department of Justice. ▲ Probation Service Health and Safety Statement reviewed and published ▲ Covid-19 Management Group convened and regular meetings held. ▲ Probation Service Return to Work Plan published and kept under review. ▲ All necessary data submitted to SEAI regarding energy usage. ▲ Liaison with OPW Optimising Power at Work on a monthly basis in respect of Haymarket office. ▲ Internal audit Report finalised with audit recommendations complete. ▲ Ongoing consultation with DPSCO in relation to the progression of Joint Controller Arrangements with partner organisations to ensure Data Protection compliance. ▲ Risk Management Committee meetings held and Risk register reviewed and updated. Risk Management policy finalised.

Update on Year 3 of the Joint Irish Prison Service & Probation Service Strategic Plan 2018-2020

Throughout the year both organisations continued to work and measure performance against the strategic goals as outlined in the Joint Irish Prison Service & Probation Service Strategy 2018-2020. Owing to the impact of COVID 19 on the overall operation of both organisations it was agreed to extend the Joint Strategy into 2021. The following outlines progress in some of the key areas for 2020.

No.	Strategic Objective	Strategic Outcomes 2020
1	Improved Sentence Management We will continue to work collaboratively to improve formation and delivery of coherent multidisciplinary sentence plans and supports for individuals from committal to post-release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Both the Community Return and Community Support Scheme continued, releasing people into the community in a structured manner with appropriate supports. 287 prisoners were released under the Community Return Scheme and 280 under the Community Support Scheme in 2020. ▲ 140 prolific offenders are successfully managed under the Joint Agency Response to Crime (J-ARC initiative). ▲ The Criminal Justice Housing First Project, a partnership initiative between the Irish Prison Service, the Probation Service and the Dublin Region Homeless Executive to address homelessness for offenders commenced, October 2020.
2	Maximise joint working between the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service We will continually improve our systems for working together in delivering services to offenders, in order to achieve greater cohesion in our work to reduce offending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The Memorandum of Understanding, detailing on how both organisations can deliver on our joint commitments, continues to be implemented. ▲ An electronic system for case management of shared clients is operational, providing a central point of information to better inform offender management. ▲ Significant developments in the use of ICT, including video technology, to improve Probation Officer access for the purpose of court reports, Parole Board assessments and pre-release preparation, driven by the Covid pandemic. ▲ Delivery of planned group work interventions have been interrupted due to COVID-19 restrictions. The use of ICT solutions have been maximised to deliver interventions in more innovative ways where circumstances have permitted.

No.	Strategic Objective	Strategic Outcomes 2020
3	<p>Develop a range of responses for female offenders to afford them more opportunity and help realise their potential</p> <p>We will work together to build on existing gender informed practice, expand options and focus on effective through care and resettlement into communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The Outlook Women's Programme, established 2019, providing accommodation and support services for female offenders operating at full capacity, while Tus Nua at the Abigail Centre also continues to provide support to women with a range of complex needs, leaving custody or on probation supervision. ▲ A gender-informed training programme, Working with Women in Custody, has been developed and commenced for some staff working with female offenders. Further training, delayed by COVID-19 restrictions, is planned for 2021.
4	<p>Enhance engagement with victims of crime</p> <p>In keeping with the requirements of the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017, EU Victims Directive (2012/29/EU) establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The joint protocol is operating well between both organisations with regular contact being maintained between the Probation Service Restorative Justice and Victim Service Unit and the Irish Prison Service Victim Liaison Unit.
5	<p>Developing innovative responses for specific groups of offenders</p> <p>We will continue to engage with specific cohorts in custody, ensuring that initiatives are based on best national and international evidence based best practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The National Violence Reduction Unit (Midlands Prison), a dedicated approach to address the complex needs of high-risk violent and disruptive prisoners, led by the IPS Psychology Service in partnership with the Probation Service and Operations Directorate of the IPS continues to support the joint management of these critical cases. ▲ A Pre-Release SORAM (Sex Offender Risk Assessment & Management) Working Group, comprising Irish Prison Service, Probation Service and other relevant stakeholders established to develop relevant operational procedures.
6	<p>Enhancing the Employability of Offenders</p> <p>We will work together in order to increase the number of ex-offenders who secure sustained employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The Irish Prison Service and Probation Service led the development of the Department of Justice Social Enterprise and Employment Strategy <i>Working to Change 2021-2023</i>, launched November 2020. The strategy sets ambitious targets to improve opportunities for sustained employments for people with experience of the criminal justice sector. ▲ A Project Manager co-funded by both organisations is in place to drive the implementation of the <i>Working to Change Strategy</i>. ▲ The second round of funding, €1.15m Kickstart Seed Fund Programme was distributed to 27 Social Enterprises to support the development of social enterprises working with offenders and former offenders.

No.	Strategic Objective	Strategic Outcomes 2020
7	Engaging service users We will work in partnership with service user organisations to provide opportunities for peer led improvements to our service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The Irish Prison Service, Probation Service and Red Cross initiative delivering peer-led interventions was instrumental in the success of managing the Covid-19 pandemic across the prison estate. ▲ Both Irish Prison Service and Probation Service continue to joint-fund a range of community based organisations that provide peer mentoring, support, advocacy and reparative opportunities for participants.
8	Promoting research and evaluation We will continue to promote research and evaluation to ensure evidence informed practice in our joint work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Research projects continued into models of working with life-sentenced and violent prisoners as well as best practice intervention models for working with females in custody and the wider criminal justice system
9	Improve the provision of Drug & Alcohol Services in Prison and the Community We will work together to increase equity of access, choice and person-centred treatment and intervention options. Co-ordination of Services will enhance clear treatment pathways. The experience of prison will be seen as an opportunity to address addictions with a focus on outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ The Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service continue to work and contribute to the National Oversight Committee for the <i>National Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery Strategy</i>. Both organisation remain committed to further enhance cross-sectoral collaboration to support the care planning process from custody to community, aligned with the broader national rehabilitation framework.



SECTION

6

Reporting on our Performance

Reporting on our Performance

Financial Statement

FINANCIAL STATEMENT INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2020							
		BUDGET ESTIMATE	SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE	ESTIMATE AND SUPPLEMENTARY	PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	SAVINGS	EXCESS
		€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
VOTE 24	JANUARY-DECEMBER 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-
B.4	Salaries, Wages and Allowances	24,234	(2,000)	22,234	21,950	2,284	-
B.5	Operating Expenses (Travel, Postal & Telecom, Office Premises, Office Machinery)	4,125	-	4,125	4,002	123	-
B.6	Services to Offenders Assistance to Voluntary Bodies (Current)	17,532	-	17,532	16,866	666	-
B.7	Community Service Order Scheme	3,045	-	3,045	1,984	1,061	-
TOTALS		48,936	(2,000)	46,936	44,802	4,134	-

FINANCIAL STATEMENT INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2019							
		BUDGET ESTIMATE	SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE	ESTIMATE AND SUPPLEMENTARY	PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	SAVINGS	EXCESS
		€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
VOTE 24	JANUARY-DECEMBER 2019	-	-	-	-	-	-
B.4	Salaries, Wages and Allowances	23,905	(2,700)	21,205	21,042	2,863	-
B.5	Operating Expenses (Travel, Postal & Telecom, Office Premises, Office Machinery)	3,375	700	4,075	4,120	-	745
B.6	Services to Offenders Assistance to Voluntary Bodies (Current)	17,532	(800)	16,732	16,629	903	-
B.7	Community Service Order Scheme	3,002	(700)	2,302	2,220	782	-
TOTALS		47,814	(3,500)	44,314	44,011	4,548	745

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997

The following information is provided in accordance with the Act within the guidelines issued by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Probation Service has procedures in place to ensure that all invoices are paid within the statutory time limit. While the procedures have been designed to ensure compliance with the Act, they only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the Act.

These procedures operate in the financial period under review and, in the case of late payments, the relevant suppliers were notified and the interest due was paid to them.

In accordance with the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997, the following information

is provided in respect of the financial period ending December 31st 2020:

Payment Practices

The Probation Service makes payment to suppliers in accordance with the terms specified in the respective invoices or conditions specified in individual contracts, if appropriate. Since 2002 the standard terms are 30 days.

Late payments:

Invoice Amount	No. of Invoices	Amount of Interest Paid €
Under €317	2	80.07
Over €317	0	0.00
Total	2	80.07

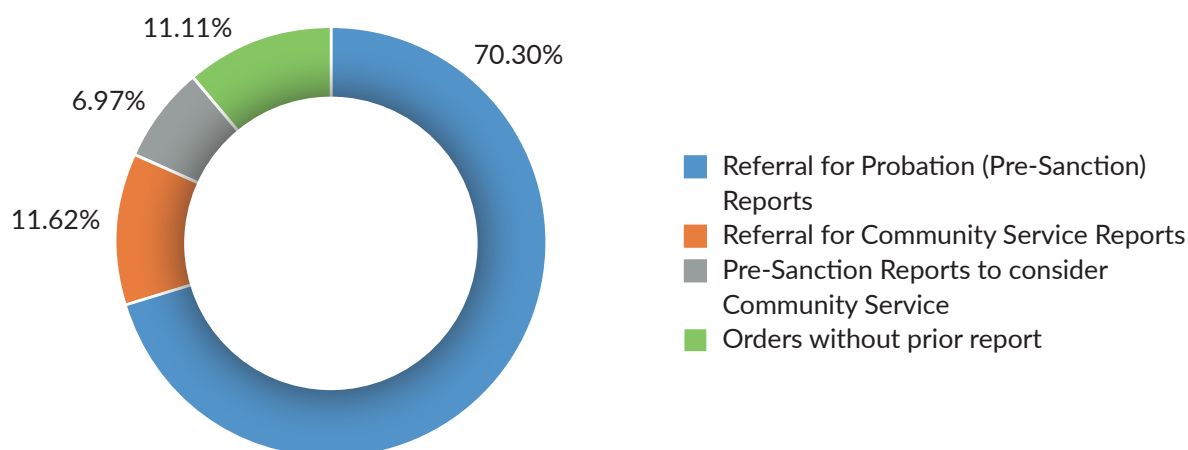
Statistics – Annual Report – 2020

Statistics – Overall

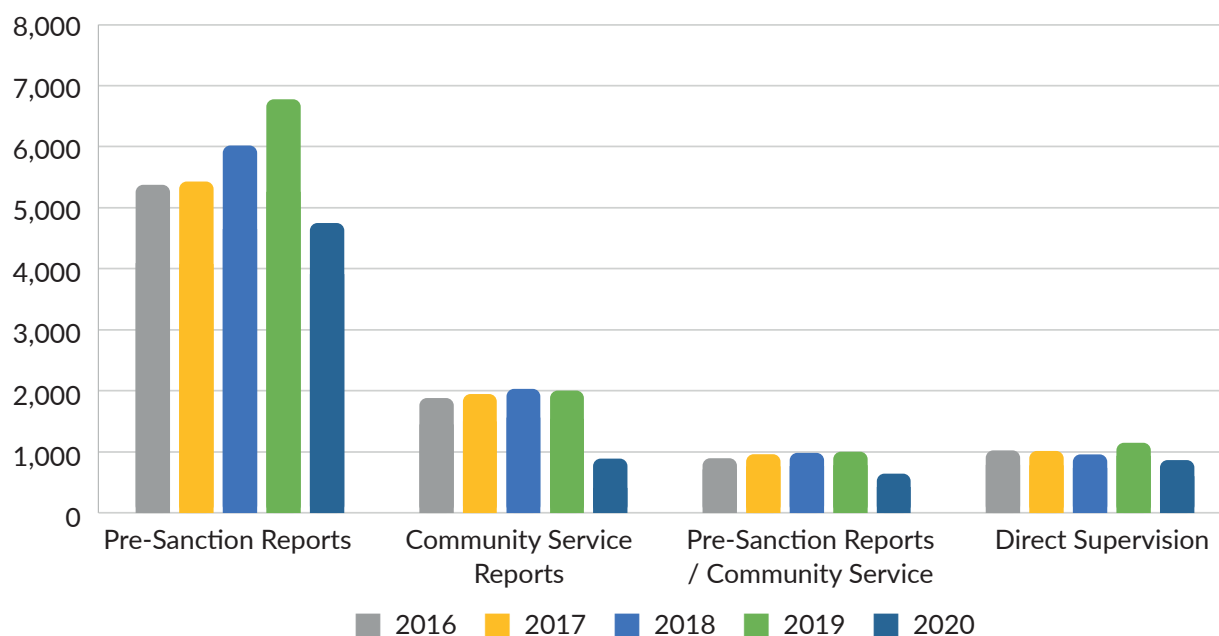
Overall	2018	2019	2020
Total number of Offenders dealt with in Community over year*	15,777	16,607	15,537
Total court referrals to the Probation Service	9,546	10,574	6,661
Total number of persons referred from Courts to the Service.	8,105	9,009	6,059

New Referrals From Court	2018	2019	2020
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	5,992	6,762	4,683
Referral for Community Service Reports	1,828	1,898	774
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	865	864	464
Orders without prior report	839	1,043	740
Family Conference	22	7	0
Total Court Referrals	9,546	10,574	6,661

Breakdown of New Referrals 2020



Trend of Offender Assessment Reports Requested 2016 to 2020



Completed Reports	2018	2019	2020
Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports**	11,579	12,502	9,366
Community Service Reports (Standard)**	1,697	1,939	1,362
Community Service Reports (Same Day)	971	996	256
Community Service Reports (Fines Act)	384	626	546
Parole Board - Assessment and Home Circumstances Reports	66	63	55
Repatriation Reports provided to the Department	19	12	9
Victim Impact Reports - Total number of reports Completed	35	19	8
Reports on Life Sentence Prisoners to IPS	68	77	87
Total Completed Reports	14,819	16,234	11,689

*This includes offenders being dealt with at the beginning of the year in addition to new referrals made during the year.

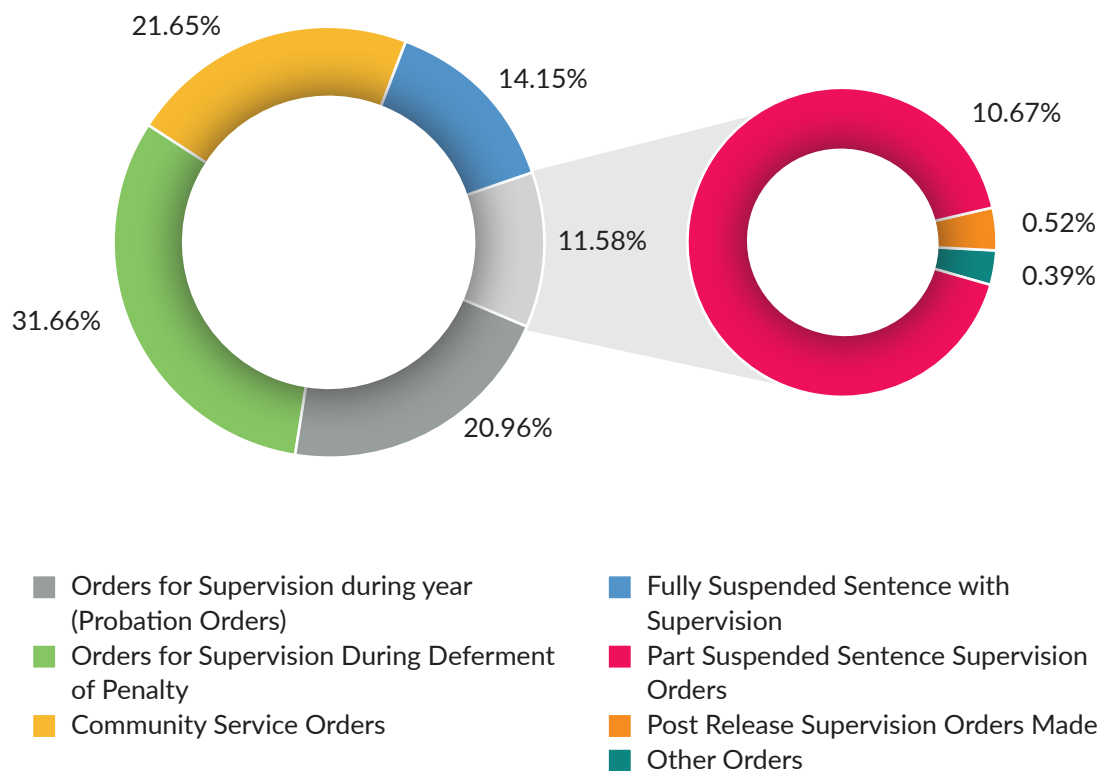
**Please note that this includes all progress reports requested from court in addition to initial assessment reports. In the case of Community Service this does not include Same Day reports.

Statistics – Supervision

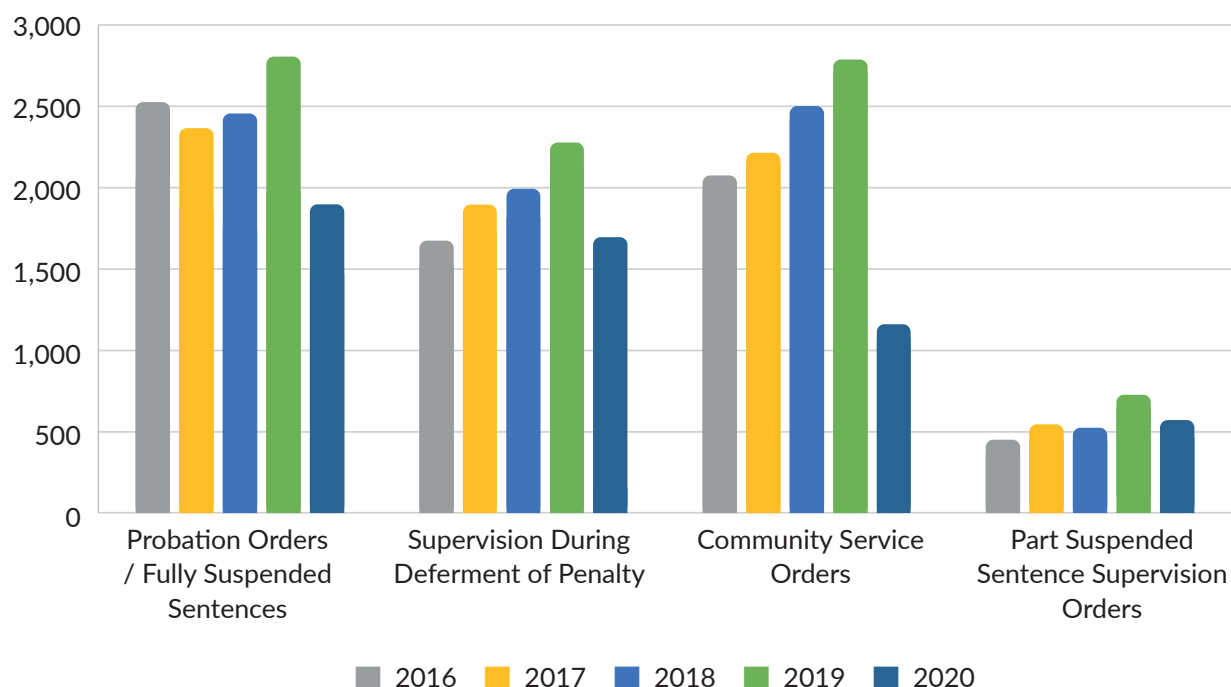
Supervision (Orders)	2018	2019	2020
Orders for Supervision during year (Probation Orders)	1,701	1,732	1,124
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	1,997	2,275	1,698
Community Service Orders	2,499	2,791	1,161
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	732	1,068	759
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders	518	726	572
Post Release Supervision Orders Made	39	57	28
Other Orders	23	12	21
Total Supervision Orders made during year	7,509	8,661	5,363
Number of life sentence prisoners supervised in the community*	98	103	115
Number of sex offenders supervised in the community*	393	407	429

* Figure for life sentence prisoners and sex offenders are the total supervised over the year.

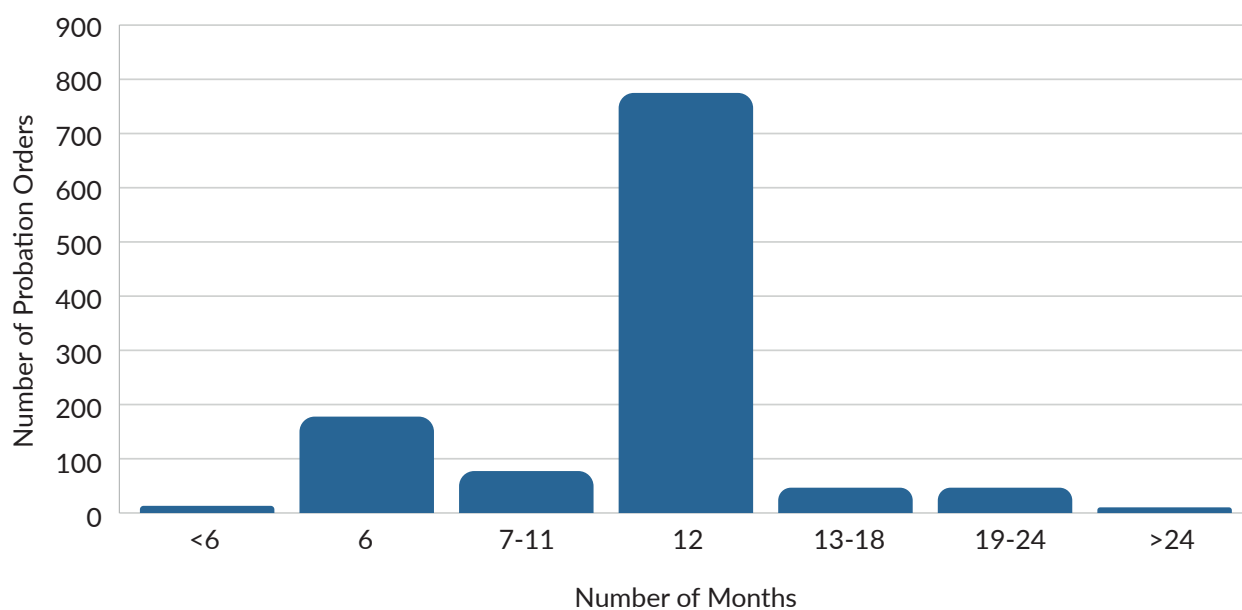
Breakdown of Court Orders – 2020



Trend of Orders Made by Year 2016 to 2020



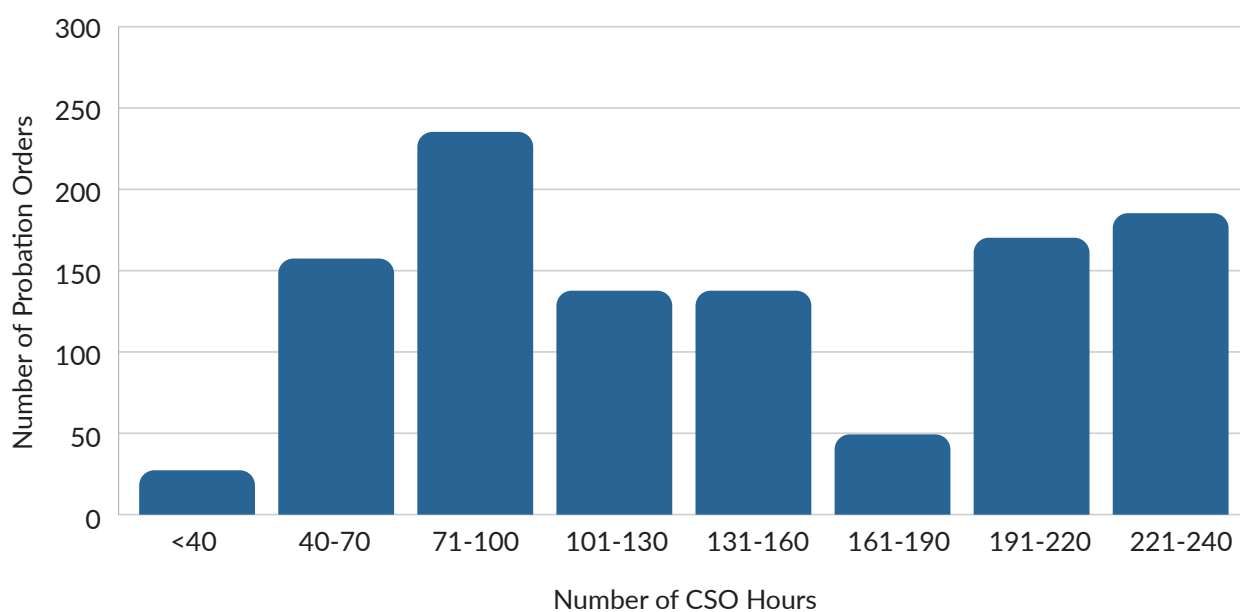
Distribution of Probation Orders made in 2020



Statistics – Community Service

Community Service	2018	2019	2020
Referral for Community Service Reports	1,828	1,898	774
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	865	864	464
Total Reports considering Community Service	2,693	2,762	1,238
Community Service Reports (Same Day)	971	996	256
Community Service Orders made	2,499	2,791	1,161
Total number of Community Service Hours ordered in lieu of custodial sentence	355,404	379,815	162,829
Total alternative sentence in years that would otherwise have been served	1,054	1,247	593

Distribution of Community Service Orders made in 2020



Statistics – Community Return and Prisons

Community Returns	2018	2019	2020
Number of offenders on Community Return on December 31st	56	87	86
Number of offenders that commenced over the year	218	206	287
Number of successful completions over the year	197	159	263

Prisons	2018	2019	2020
Total number of prisoners dealt with over the year	2,524	2,689	2,730
Number of prisoners on PSSSO's in prison on December 31st	712	835	837
Number of sex offenders in prison on December 31st that have been in contact with the Probation Service	287	340	345
Number of new prisoners in contact with Probation Service	477	567	363

Age/ Gender Breakdown of New Court Referrals

Age Category	Gender			%
	Female	Male	Total	Female
12-17	29	403	432	6.7%
18-24	200	1,494	1,694	11.8%
25-34	393	1,925	2,318	17.0%
35-44	269	1,036	1,305	20.6%
45-54	112	461	573	19.5%
>54	90	249	339	26.5%
Total	1,093	5,568	6,661	16.4%

Statistics – Female offenders

New Referrals From Court	2018	2019	2020
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	1,188	1,220	803
Referral for Community Service Reports	213	219	105
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	113	120	63
Orders without prior report	155	158	122
Family Conference	3	0	0
Total Referrals Female Offenders	1,672	1,717	1,093

Supervision (Female Offenders)	2018	2019	2020
Probation Orders	371	356	229
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	360	356	237
Community Service Orders	291	352	167
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	137	181	118
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders	45	47	27
Other Orders	2	0	2
Total	1,206	1,292	780

Statistics – Young Persons

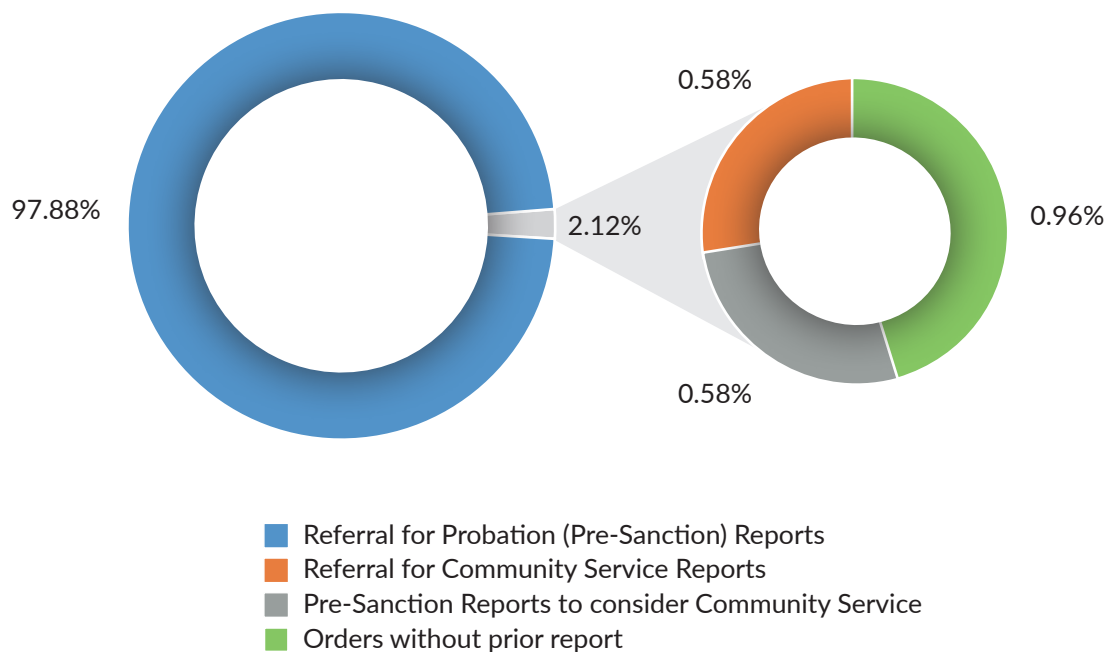
New Referrals From Court	2018	2019	2020
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	700	641	508
Referral for Community Service Reports	2	3	**
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	4	7	**
Orders without prior report	12	15	**
Family Conference	22	7	**
Total Referrals Young Persons	740	673	519

Supervision	2018	2019	2020
Probation Orders	290	275	198
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	289	254	233
Community Service Orders	15	16	13
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	27	20	17
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders Made	3	5	**
Deferment of Detention Orders	0	0	0
Detention & Supervision Orders	23	11	21
Other Orders*	1	0	**
Total Supervision Orders Young Persons	648	581	490

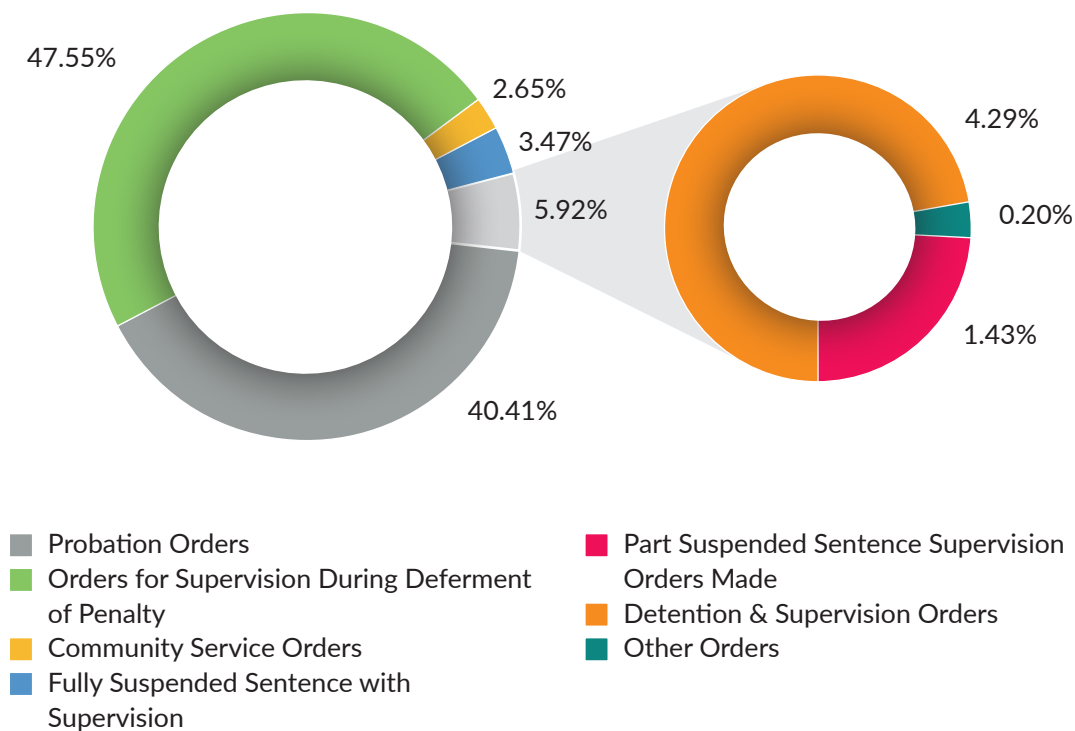
*Other Orders includes various disposals under the Children Act, 2001.

** Beginning from 2020 Data for some categories are not displayed in accordance with Statistical Disclosure control to ensure that individuals are protected against disclosure.

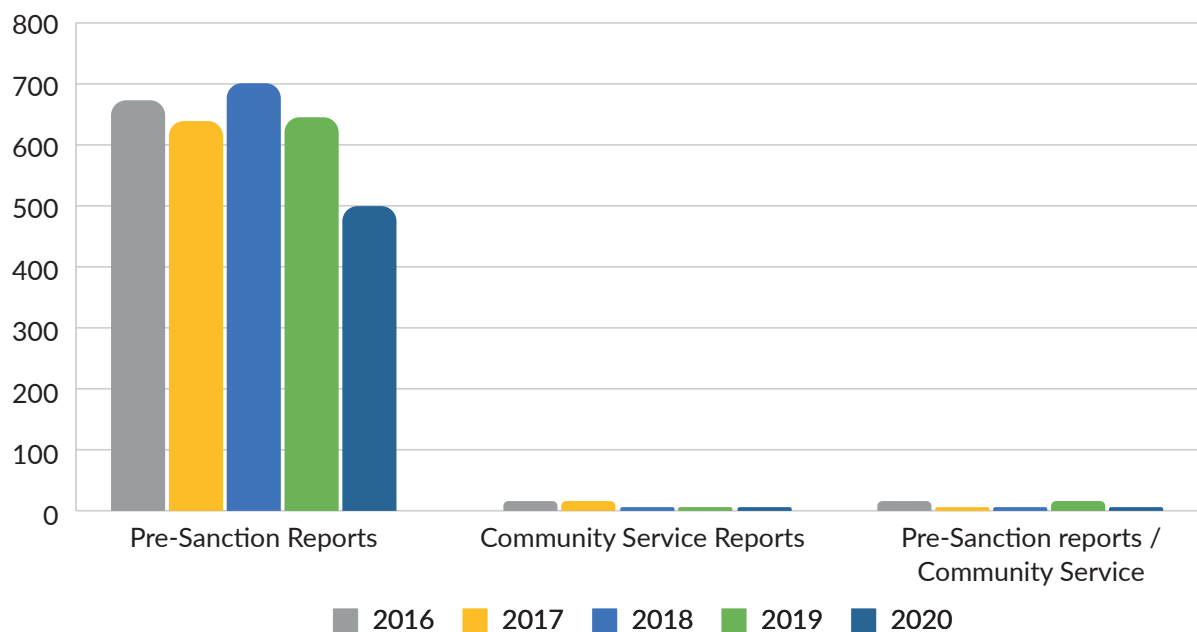
New Referrals (Young Persons) 2020



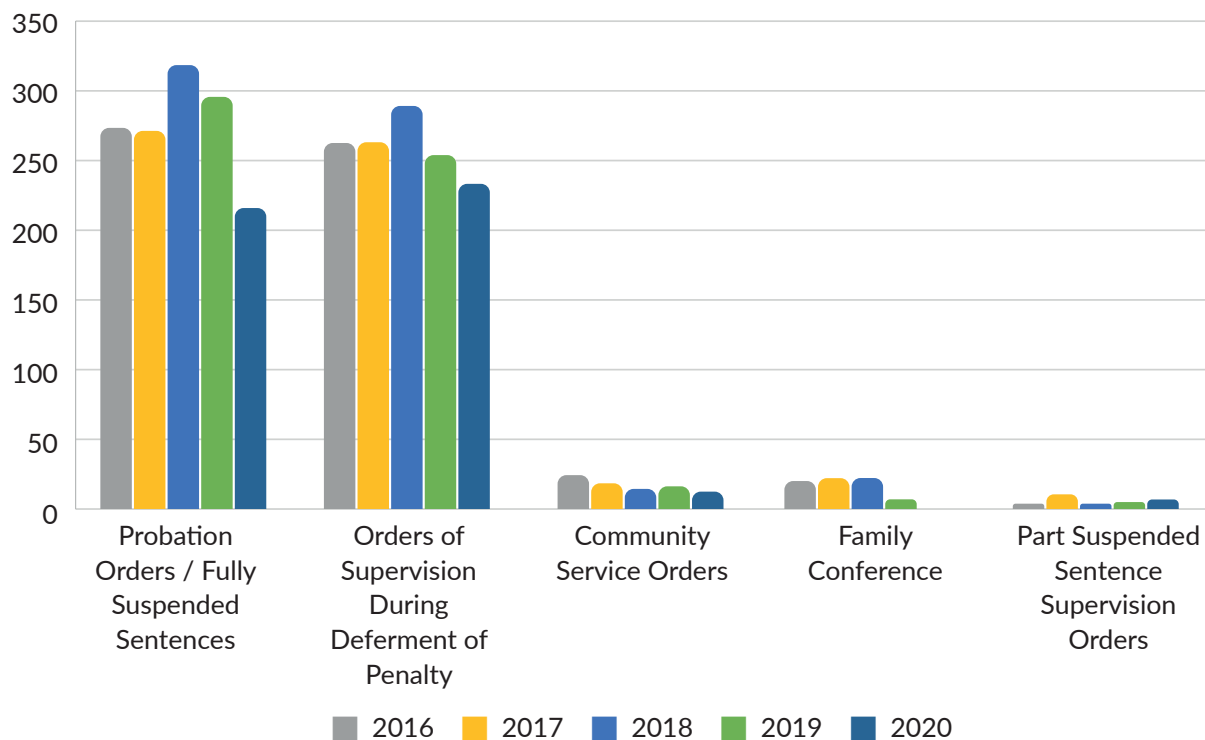
Court Orders (Young Persons) 2020



Trend of Offender Assessment Reports Requested (Young Persons) 2016 to 2020



Trend of Orders Made by Year (Young Persons) 2016 – 2020

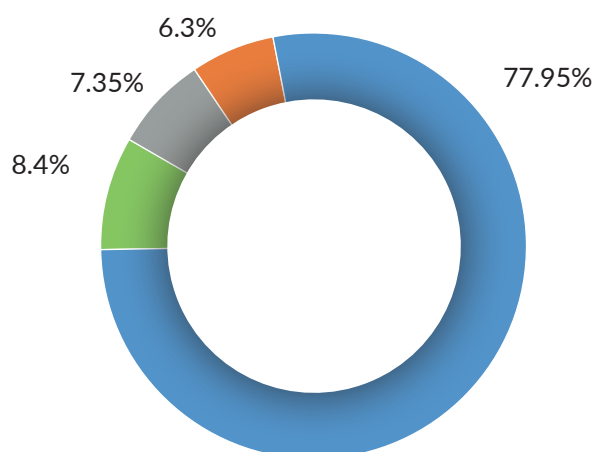


Statistics – 18 to 21 year olds

New Referrals From Court	2018	2019	2020
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	979	1,042	742
Referral for Community Service Reports	221	186	60
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	136	123	70
Orders without prior report	114	112	80
Family Conference	1	0	0
Total Referrals Young Adults	1,451	1,463	952

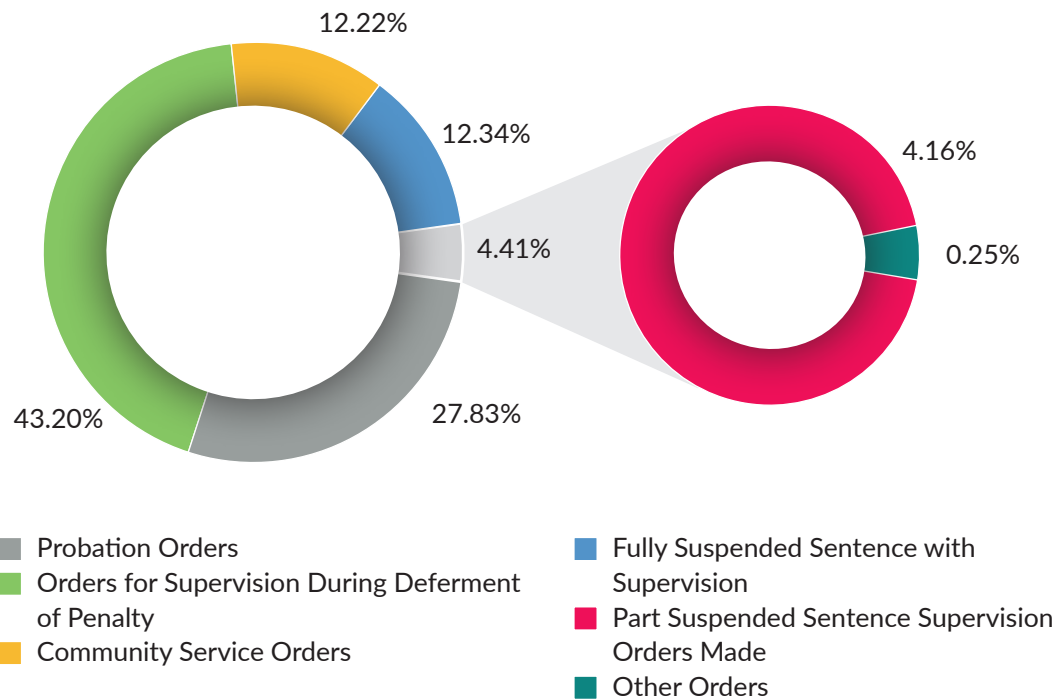
Supervision	2018	2019	2020
Probation Orders	314	291	221
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	359	407	343
Community Service Orders	334	291	97
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	95	123	98
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders Made	18	33	33
Other Orders	1	1	2
Total Supervision Orders Young Adults	1,121	1,146	794

New Referrals (18 to 21 Year Olds) 2020

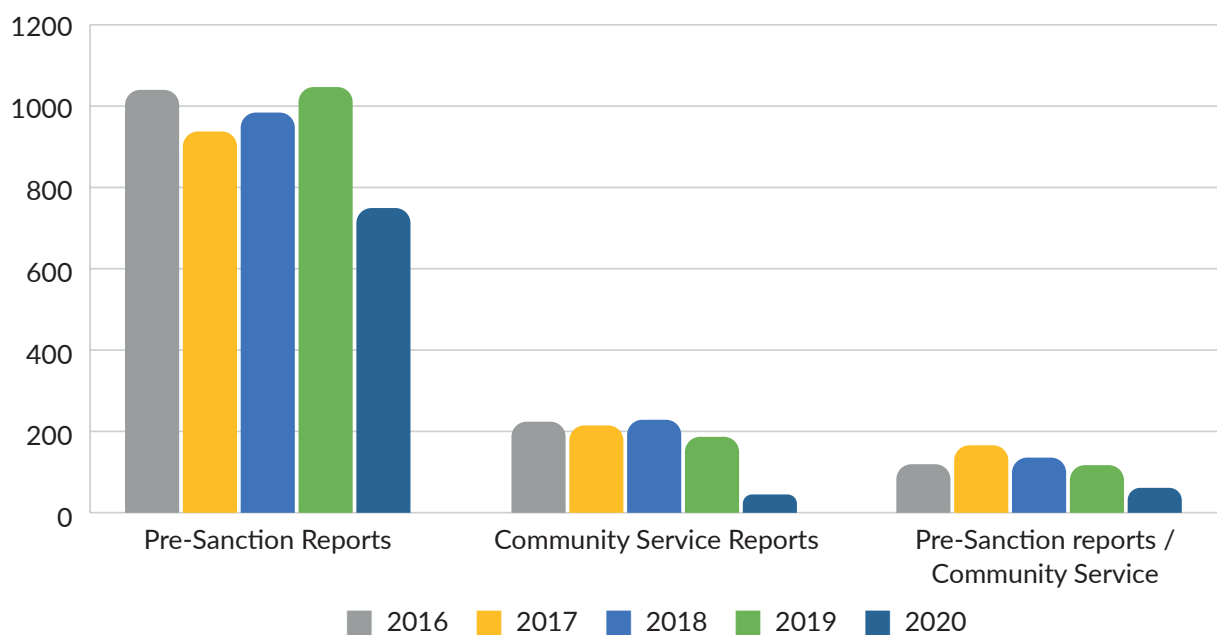


- Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports
- Referral for Community Service Reports
- Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service
- Orders without prior report

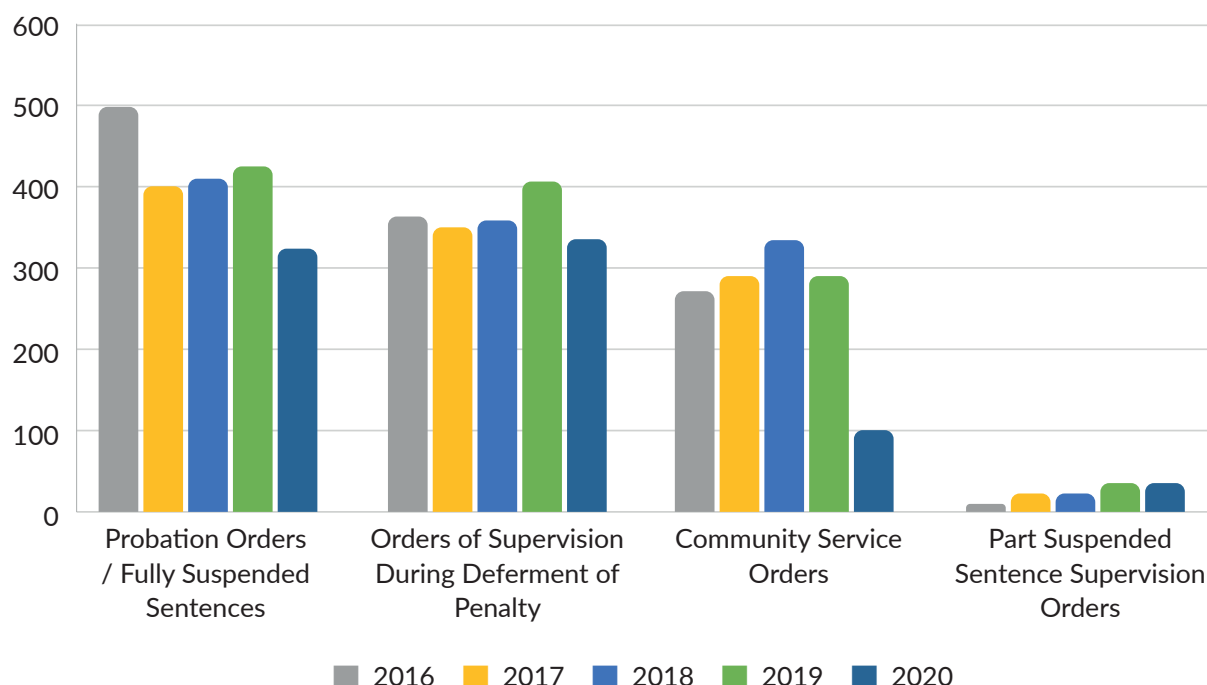
Court Orders (18 to 21 Year Olds) 2020



Trend of Offender Assessment Reports Requested (18 to 21 Year Olds) 2016 to 2020



Trend of Orders Made by Year (18 to 21 Year Olds) 2016 - 2020



Flow of Persons on Supervision during 2020

Order Type	Active Jan 1 2020	Orders Commenced	Orders Closed	Active Jan 1 2021
Probation Order	1,754	1,061	1,575	1,240
Community Service Order	2,382	1,085	1,781	1,686
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	1,310	744	878	1,176
Part Suspended Sentence with Supervision	1,095	567	486	1,176
Community Return	87	287	288	86
Life Sentence Prisoner Supervision	99	14	3	110
Post Release Supervision	125	29	30	124
Family Conference	3	0	2	1
Deferment of Penalty	648	1,620	1,582	686
Other	56	21	24	53
Total	7,559	5,428	6,649	6,338

Offence Breakdown of all Referrals and Orders made 2020

Offence Category	Referrals During 2020	Probation Type Supervision	Community Service Orders
Drug Offences	19.5%	20.9%	13.7%
Theft	16.6%	21.2%	14.6%
Assault Offences	15.7%	14.7%	11.9%
Public Order Offences	8.7%	9.5%	11.9%
Road Traffic Offences	8.0%	4.0%	19.9%
Burglary	6.8%	7.3%	2.8%
Property Offences	3.8%	4.6%	3.8%
Dangerous Acts	3.5%	4.0%	4.9%
Weapons & Explosives	3.2%	3.4%	2.8%
Fraud Offences	3.0%	1.2%	3.4%
Miscellaneous Offences	2.9%	0.5%	8.4%
Offences against Justice	2.8%	3.6%	1.1%
Sexual Offences	2.6%	2.7%	0.2%
Robbery	2.3%	2.0%	0.4%
Homicide Offences	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%
Kidnapping	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

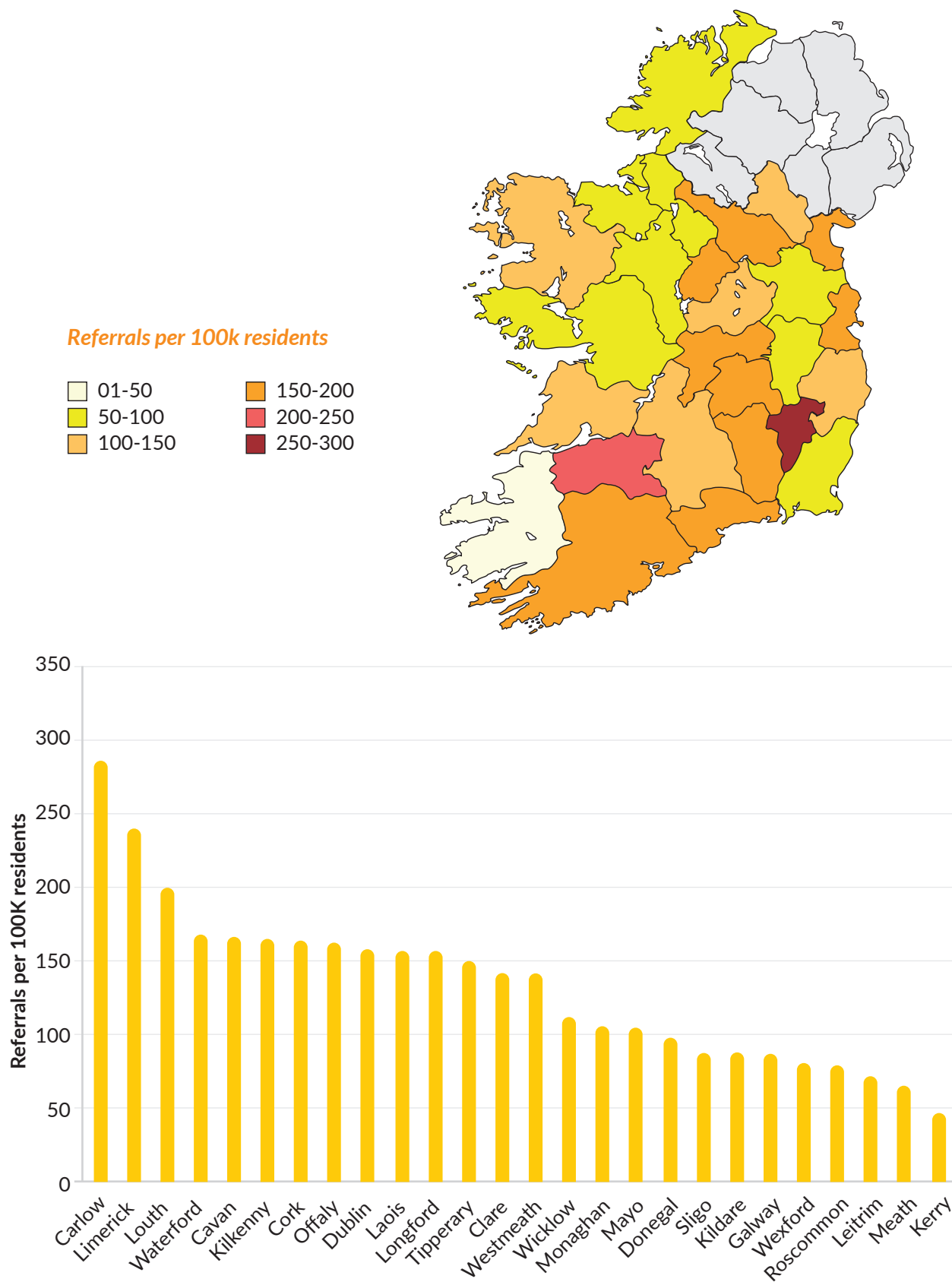
Referrals by Court Venue - 2020

	Jurisdiction			
	Circuit Court and Higher Courts	Circuit Court Appeals from District Court	District Court	Total
Dublin (CCJ)	568	75	844	1,487
Blanchardstown	3	.	245	248
Smithfield	.	.	135	135
Dunlaoghaire	.	.	84	84
Tallaght	.	.	69	69
Swords	.	.	39	39
Cloverhill	.	.	25	25
Drug Treatment Court	.	.	23	23
Balbriggan	.	.	10	10
Four Courts	.	.	3	3
Total Dublin (City and County)	571	75	1,477	2,123
Cork	51	3	380	434
Limerick	73	10	330	413
Kilkenny	34	6	158	198
Dundalk	61	5	125	191
Waterford City	50	27	95	172
Carlow	18	2	147	167
Naas	83	18	56	157
Portlaoise	35	7	107	149
Galway City	70	6	66	142
Tullamore	31	6	98	135
Ennis	27	6	96	129
Cavan	35	6	86	127
Letterkenny	34	6	79	119
Castlebar	38	8	70	116
Trim	53	2	46	101
Mullingar	57	3	38	98
Midleton	.	.	88	88
Mallow	.	.	87	87
Bandon	.	1	85	86
Clonmel	47	.	38	85
Wexford	41	12	28	81
Wicklow	41	8	29	78
Newcastlewest	.	.	70	70
Fermoy	.	.	70	70
Bray	.	.	64	64
Nenagh	7	.	55	62

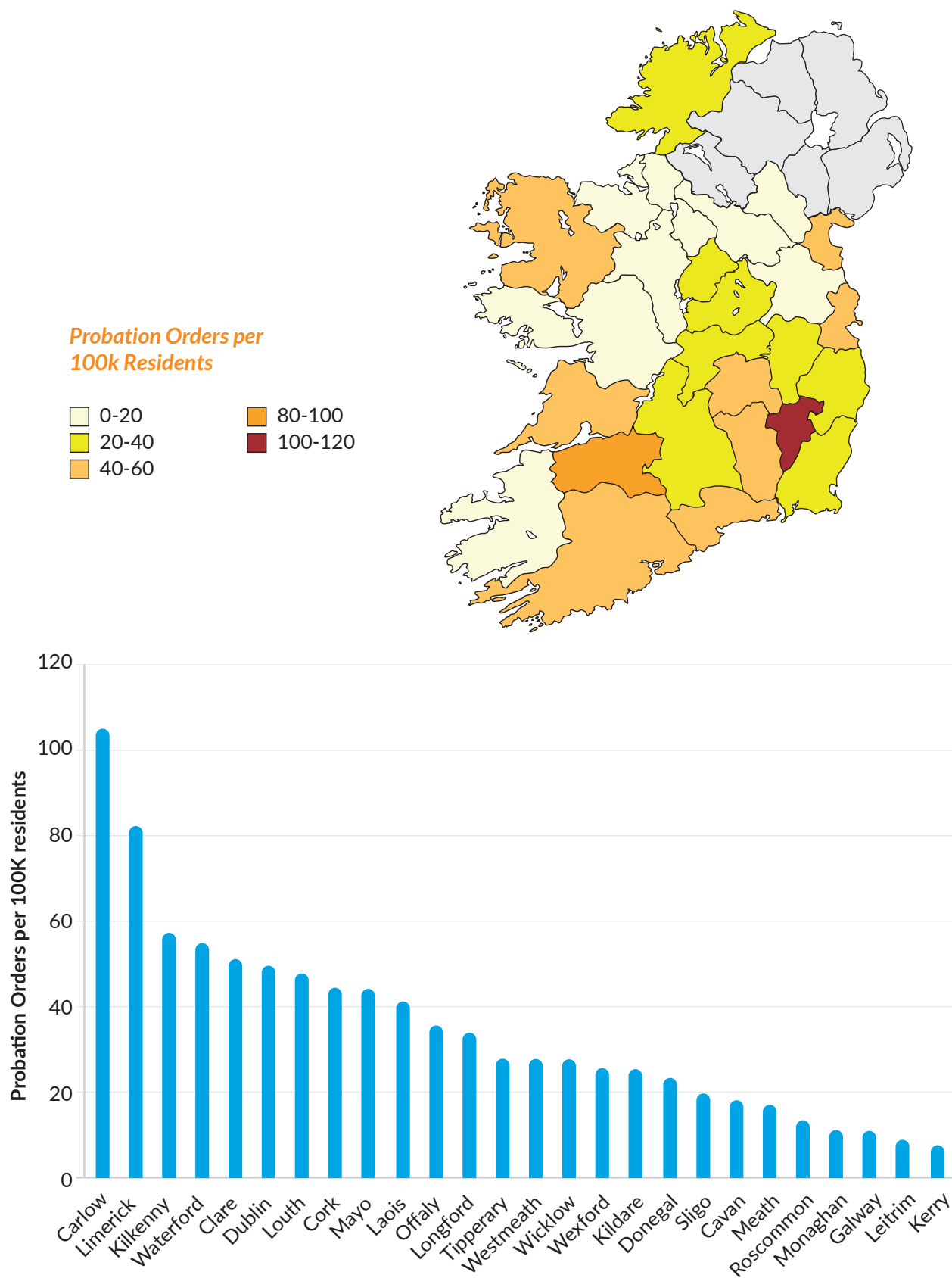
	Jurisdiction			
	Circuit Court and Higher Courts	Circuit Court Appeals from District Court	District Court	Total
Drogheda	.	.	62	62
Longford	22	3	28	53
Monaghan	9	.	42	51
Sligo	20	.	26	46
Tralee	19	4	22	45
Clonakilty	.	2	34	36
Athlone	.	.	32	32
Ballinasloe	.	.	31	31
Youghal	.	.	31	31
Bantry	.	.	30	30
Gorey	.	.	28	28
Thurles	.	.	28	28
Virginia	.	.	28	28
Roscommon	22	1	4	27
Ballina	.	.	26	26
Arklow	.	.	24	24
Macroom	.	1	20	21
Loughrea	.	.	21	21
Tuam	.	.	20	20
Carrickmacross	.	3	15	18
Kinsale	.	.	16	16
Killarney	1	3	11	15
Carrick-On-Shannon	4	.	11	15
Cashel	.	.	15	15
Kilrush	.	.	14	14
Skibbereen	.	.	14	14
Dungarvan	.	.	14	14
Tipperary	.	.	13	13
Ballyshannon	.	.	13	13
Carndonagh	.	.	12	12
Castlerea	.	.	10	10
Overall Total	1,592	237	4,832	6,661

All other courts have made 10 or less referrals in 2020. The total figures include all referrals, some not shown in table.

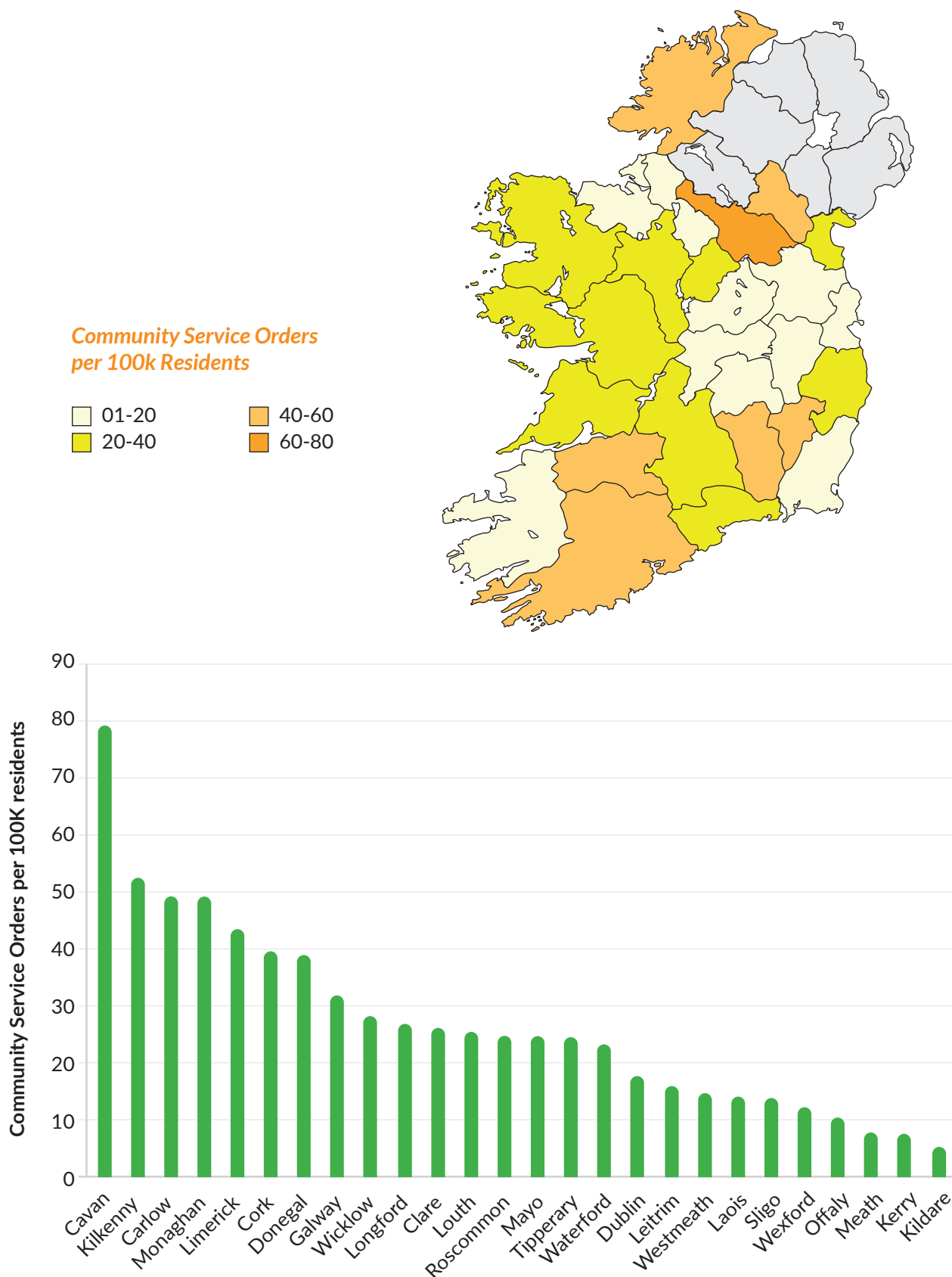
New Referrals by County in 2020 per 100,000 Residents



Probation Orders by County in 2020 per 100,000 Residents



Community Service Orders by County in 2020 per 100,000 Residents



SECTION

7

Appendices

Appendix 1

Glossary of Terms

Assessment

Probation Officers deliver an offender assessment service to courts to assist in sentencing decisions, particularly where probation supervision or community service is being considered. There are two main types of offender assessment report:

Pre-Sanction Report (PSR)

These are also known as 'probation reports', assessing suitability for a community sanction and issues relevant to reducing reoffending. Building on the findings of structured risk assessment, probation reports outline the underlying factors in the offending behaviour, the offender's attitude to the crime and motivation to change, and action to be taken to help prevent further offending.

Community Service Report (CSR)

These reports assess suitability of an offender to do unpaid work in the community instead of going to prison.

Supervision Probation Orders

Probation Orders are one of a range of options open to courts when sentencing individuals found guilty of criminal behaviour. Offenders give an undertaking to the court that they will be of good behaviour; avoid further crime; adhere to the conditions of the order and to follow the directions of a supervising Probation Officer, who will monitor and help them to stay out of further trouble.

Community Service Orders

Instead of a prison sentence, convicted offenders over 16 years of age may, instead, be given the opportunity by the court to perform unpaid work for the community. The legislation for Community Service Orders allows a Judge to sentence an offender to between 40 and 240 hours work. Any Order made must be completed within a year. Community Service is

a direct alternative to a prison sentence and an Order will only be made by the Judge where a custodial sentence has first been considered.

Community Return

The Community Return Programme is an incentivised scheme introduced in line with the recommendations of the Thornton Hall Project Review Group which provides for earned temporary release under which offenders who are assessed by the Irish Prison Service are offered early temporary release in return for supervised community service. Officers of the Probation Service assess offenders as to suitability and motivation to complete the community work. The scheme is applicable to suitably assessed prisoners who are serving sentences of more than one and less than eight years. Those participating are granted renewable temporary release having served at, or after, the 50% stage of their sentence with a condition of their release to undertake community service supervised by the Probation Service.

Supervision During Deferment of Penalty

Supervision during deferment of penalty is a judicial practice whereby the court does not proceed to determine the appropriate penalty but instead postpones the decision to a further date, on condition that the offender complies with the supervision of a Probation Officer and avoids reoffending.

Post Release Supervision

Under the Sex Offenders Act, 2001, Judges can sentence sex offenders to a period of probation supervision following their release from prison. Such offenders are monitored closely. During supervision, the Probation Officer focuses on the offence committed and its implications for public safety, helping the offender to see the past offending behaviour as a problem, identify risk factors and develop strategies and supports to ensure there is no repeat offending.

Conditional Suspended or Part- Suspended Sentences

Judges can deal with a case by way of a suspended or part-suspended sentence with conditions of probation supervision. This means the Judge may:

- ▲ Issue a prison sentence of a number of months or years; and
- ▲ Suspend all or part of the sentence for a period of time, conditional on the offender remaining under the supervision of a Probation Officer for the specified time for which the custodial sentence is suspended.

Supervised Temporary Release

The Probation Service supervises some prisoners on temporary release from custody (as provided for in the Criminal Justice Act, 1960 and the Criminal Justice (Temporary Release of Prisoners) Act, 2003) in the community with specific conditions aimed at helping with their reintegration in the community and to avoid further offending. Life sentence prisoners on release in the community are obliged to cooperate and comply with Probation Service supervision as a condition of temporary release. Such prisoners, in the normal course, remain subject to supervision for the remainder of their lives.

Family Conferencing

In addition to the above, there are a variety of disposals managed by the Probation Service specific to young persons who offend, as outlined under the Children Act 2001, as amended. These include Family Conferencing. A Family Conference is based on principles of restorative justice which, in essence, means healing the harm done to victims, while holding the offender accountable for his or her actions. The aim of the Family Conference is to divert the young person who has accepted responsibility for his/her behaviour from court, conviction and custody, and from committing further offences.

Action Taken in Cases of Non-Compliance

With Court Orders In cases where offenders on supervision fail to comply with the terms of any of the above supervision orders, they are returned to the relevant court to face the consequences. This can include imposition of an alternative penalty, up to and including a custodial sentence.

Joint Agency Response To Crime (J-ARC)

J-ARC is a joint strategy developed and agreed by An Garda Síochána, the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service in 2015. It aims to provide a strengthened and visible inter agency approach in the management of identified recidivist offenders in order to reduce crime and increase public safety.

SORAM

The Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management (SORAM) model is a structured system for sharing information and expertise on those offenders subject to supervision requirements of the courts, and Garda notification under the legislation, and managed on a multi-agency basis.

OFFENDER SUPERVISION FRAMEWORK (OSF)

The Offender Supervision Framework, designed in 2019, describes the model and methods used by the Irish Probation Service with clients, from the initial point of engagement until contact is completed. It draws on “what works” and “who works” principles and desistance theories. It is underpinned by research and empirical evidence.

Appendix 2

Statement On The Probation Service System Of Internal Control

Scope of Responsibility

I along with senior management acknowledge responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the Probation Service for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Capacity to Handle Risk

There is a non-statutory Senior Management Team (Executive Leadership Team) in place, which comprises the Director, Deputy Directors, Assistant Director and the Accountant. Any major strategic matters, which arise for the Probation Service, are considered by this Team, which meets monthly. The Department's Internal Audit Unit provides support to the Probation Service in monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of its arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control. I have put procedures in place to ensure the reports of the Internal Audit function are followed up.

As the Probation Service falls under the Justice Vote (Vote 24), the Department's Audit Committee supports the Probation Service in order to provide oversight, ensuring that the interests of Government and other stakeholders are protected in relation to business and financial reporting and internal control.

Risk and Control Framework

The Probation Service has its own Risk Management Policy in place. This Risk Management System identifies and reports key risks and management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate these risks. A risk register is in place. The register is reviewed and updated by the Probation Service Risk Management Committee. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- ▲ Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability
- ▲ A budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management
- ▲ Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action
- ▲ There are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems, the IM & T Division of the Department of Justice provide the Probation Service with ICT services through the Managed Service.
- ▲ The HR Division of the Department of Justice provides a Human Resource Management

Service not limited to recruitment involving employee relations, workforce development, performance management and liaison with (HR) shared services.

Ongoing Monitoring & Review

Formal procedures are in place for monitoring control processes and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action and to management, where relevant, in a timely manner. I can confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- ▲ Key risks are related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and reports any identified deficiencies
- ▲ There is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by the Probation Service's senior management team
- ▲ There are regular reviews by the Probation Service's senior management team of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts
- ▲ Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned
- ▲ Audits of financial and other controls are carried out by the Department's Internal Audit Unit.

Procurement

The Probation Service ensures that there is an appropriate focus on good practice in purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant guidelines and procurement policy.

Review of Effectiveness

The Probation Service in monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures is informed by the reports of the Department's Internal Audit Unit and the reports and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General. The

Department of Justice Internal Audit Unit conducted a Review of Internal Controls 2020 which was finalised in March 2021.

Internal Control Issues

The report on the *Review of Internal Controls 2020* indicated that there are effective controls in place with minor improvements required in the controls and their application.

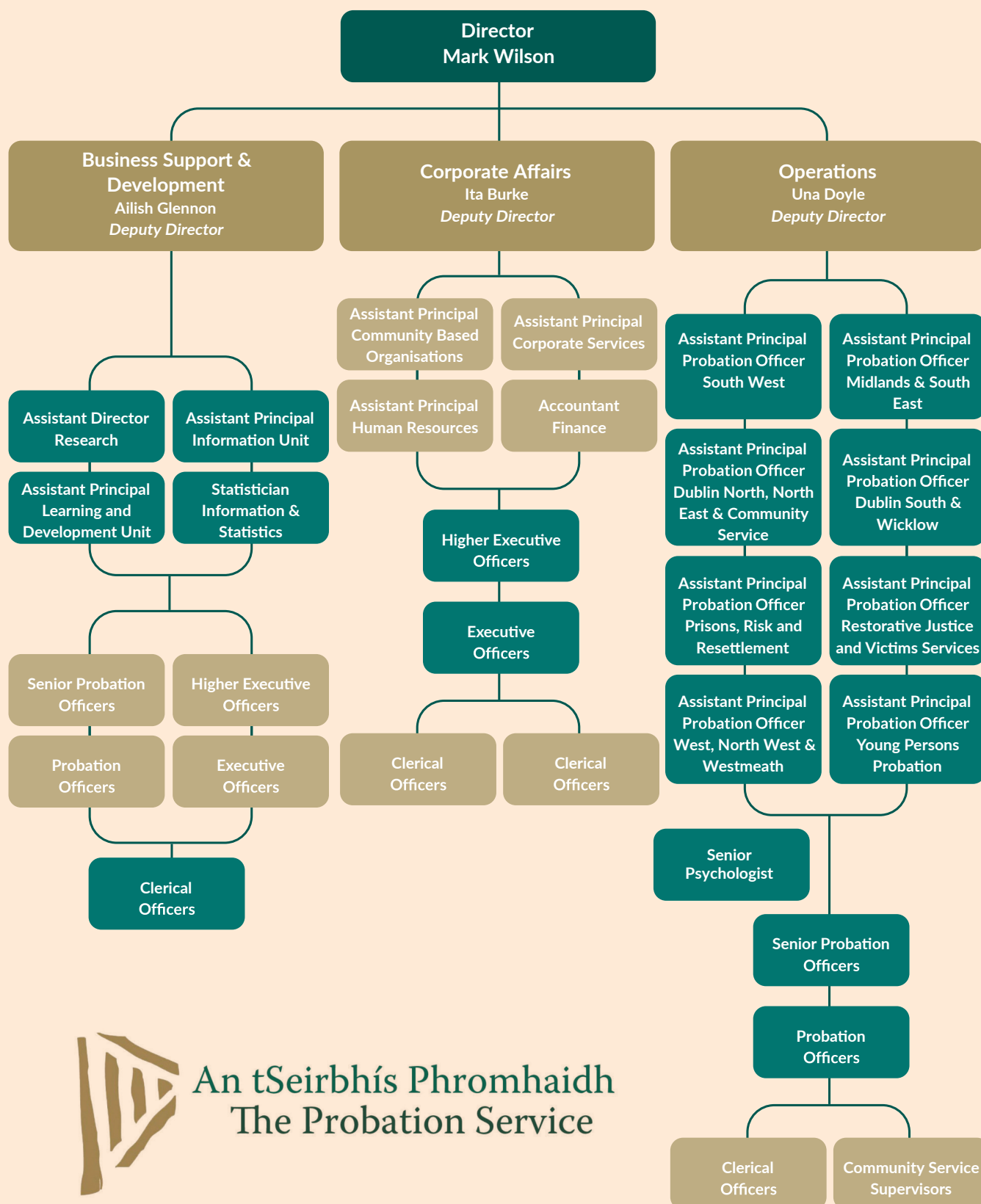
DPER Public Spending Code

I confirm that the appropriate requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Public Spending Code are being complied with.

Mark Wilson
Director

Appendix 3

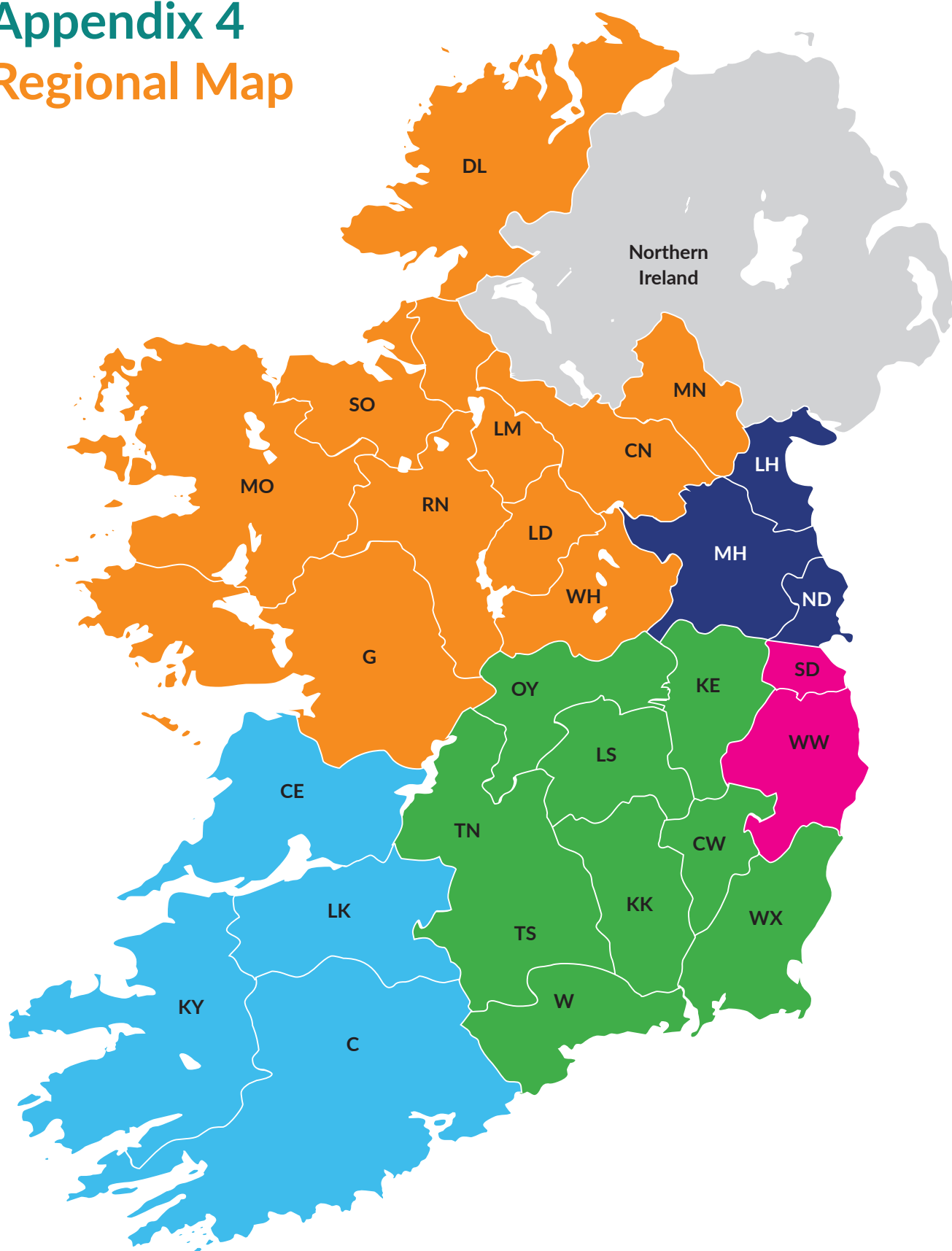
Organisational Chart



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service

Appendix 4

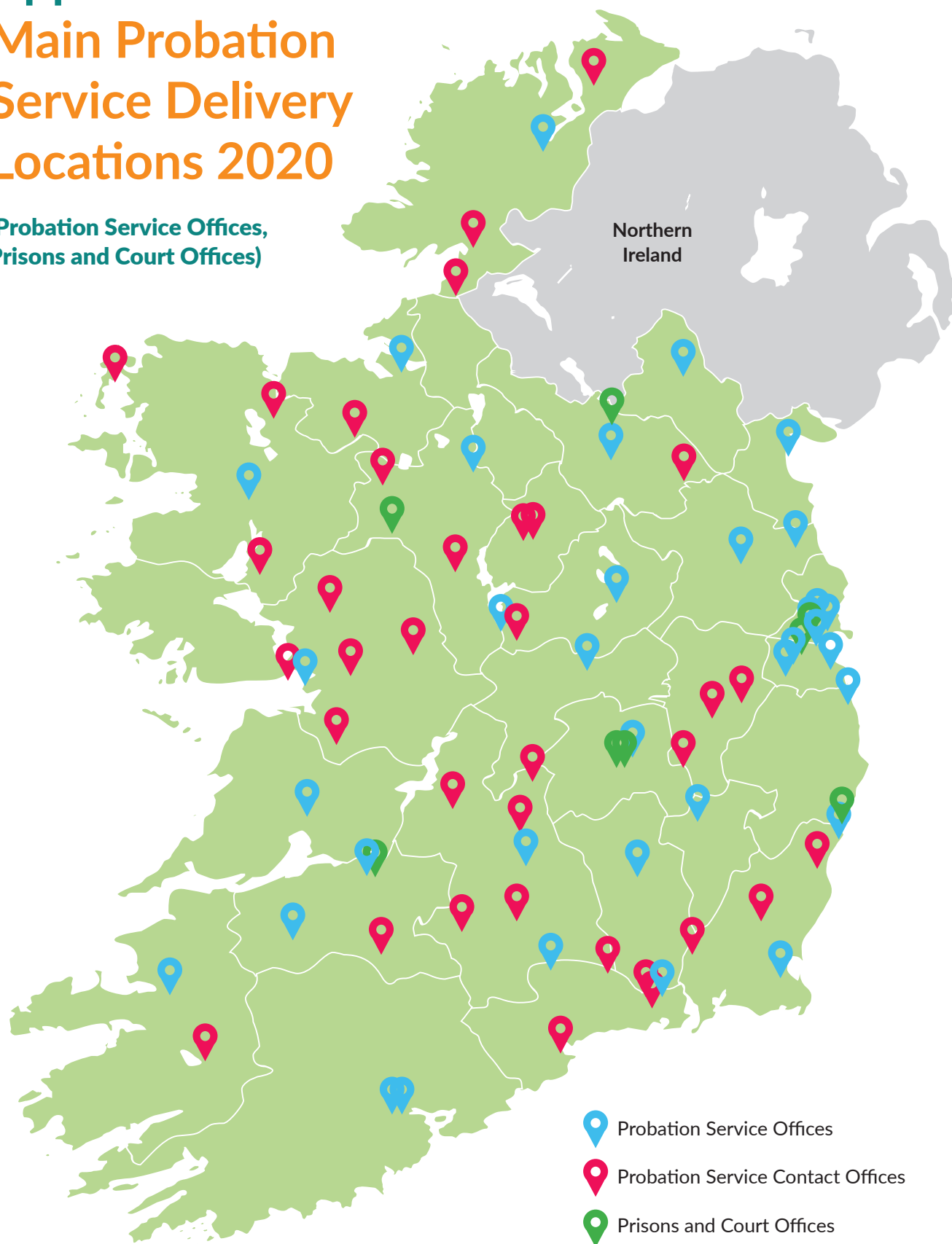
Regional Map



Appendix 5

Main Probation Service Delivery Locations 2020

(Probation Service Offices,
Prisons and Court Offices)



Appendix 6

Community Based Organisations

In receipt of funding support through the Probation Service

- 1) Adventure Sports Project (YPP), 21 Summerhill Place, Buckingham Street, Dublin 1.
- 2) Aftercare Recovery Group, 48 Seville Place, Dublin 1
- 3) Aiséirí Cahir, Townspark, Cahir, Co Tipperary
- 4) Aiséirí Wexford, Roxborough, Wexford, Co Wexford
- 5) Aislinn (YPP), Ballyragget, Co Kilkenny
- 6) Ana Liffey Project, 48 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1
- 7) Athy Alternative Project, Community Service Centre, Unit 1 Nelson Street, Athy, Co Kildare R14 PD88
- 8) Ballinasloe Training Workshop, Canal House, Harbour Road, Ballinasloe, Co Galway
- 9) Ballymun Youth Action Project, Horizons Centre, Balcurreis Road, Ballymun, Dublin
- 10) Ballyrunners, Ballymun Job Centre Co-op, Ballymun Civic Centre, Dublin 9.
- 11) Bridge Project, Unit 3, 131-133 Francis Street, Dublin 8
- 12) Bushypark (Clarecare), Bushypark Treatment Centre, Bushypark, Ennis, Co Clare
- 13) Candle Community Trust (YPP), PO Box 1145, Lynch's Lane, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10
- 14) Care After Prison, 56 Aungier Street, Dublin 2.
- 15) Céim ar Chéim (YPP), Moyross Youth Academy, The Bays, Knockalisheen, Moyross, Co Limerick
- 16) Céim Eile (Aiseiri), 1 Glencarra, Ballybeg, Waterford, Co Waterford
- 17) Churchfield Community Trust, 107-109 Knockfree Avenue, Churchfield, Cork City, Co Cork
- 18) Coolmine Therapeutic Community, Ashleigh House, Damastown Walk, Damastown, Dublin 15
- 19) Cork Alliance Centre, Robert Scott House, 6 Patrick's Quay, Cork City, Co Cork
- 20) Cornmarket Project – Wexford Local Development, Old County Hall, Spawell Road, Wexford, Co Wexford
- 21) Cox's Demesne (YPP), The House, 15-16 Oakland Park, Dundalk, Co Louth
- 22) Crinan, 72 Sean McDermott Street, Dublin 1
- 23) Carlow Regional Youth Services, Montgomery House, Athy Road, Carlow.
- 24) Cuan Mhuire Athy, Milltown, Athy, Co. Kildare
- 25) Cuan Mhuire Bruree, Bruree, Co Limerick
- 26) Cuan Mhuire Coolarne, Coolarne, Turloughmore, Athenry, Co Galway
- 27) Cuan Mhuire Farnanes, Merri Heits, Farnanes, Co Cork
- 28) Daughters of Charity Community Services (YPP), 8/9 Henrietta Street, Dublin 1
- 29) Dóchas don Óige (YPP), Liosban Industrial Estate, Tuam Road, Galway, Co Galway H91V20H
- 30) Fellowship House, Spur Hill, Doughcloyne, Togher, Cork City, Co Cork
- 31) Fusion CPL, Cherry Orchard Health Centre, Cherry Orchard Grove, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10
- 32) GROW, National Support Office, 5 Forrest Mews, Forrest Road, Swords, Co Dublin
- 33) Guild of St Philip Neri, St Vincent De Paul, 91-92 Sean McDermott Street, Dublin
- 34) Kerry Adolescent Counselling (YPP), Balloonagh, Tralee, Co Kerry
- 35) Kilkenny Employment for Youth, Garden Row, Off High Street, Kilkenny, Co Kilkenny

- 36) IASIO (Linkage Programme), Block 3, Grove Court, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.
 - 37) Le Chéile (YPP), 24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
 - 38) Matt Talbot Adolescent Services (Residential) (YPP), Rockview, 7 Trabeg Lawn, Douglas, Co Cork - closed 19th October 2020.
 - 39) Matt Talbot Adolescent Day Services CLG Counselling (YPP), Cara Lodge Residential Treatment Centre, Ahiohill, Enniskeane, Co Cork/ Day Services Youth Enterprise Scheme Tramore Commercial Park, Tramore Road Cork
 - 40) Matt Talbot Community Trust, Rear of Assumption Church, Kylemore Road, Ballyfermot,
- Dublin 10**
- 41) Merchants Quay Project, 24 Merchants Court, Merchants Quay, Dublin 8
 - 42) Pro-Social Ireland, 18 Celtic Apartments, Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, F92 YF57
 - 43) PACE, Block 3, Grove Court, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15
 - 44) PALLS, Unit 2, Docklands Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick City, Co Limerick
 - 45) Restorative Justice in the Community, Annbrook Business Centre, Cleary's Garage, Nenagh, Co Tipperary
 - 46) Restorative Justice Services, Marshalsea Court, 23 Merchants Quay, Dublin 8.
 - 47) SAOL Project, 58 Amiens Street, Dublin 1
 - 48) SOLAS, Unit 1, Liberty View, Longs Place, Dublin 8, D08WY84
 - 49) Southill Outreach (YPP), The Factory, Southside Youthspace, Galvone Industrial Estate, Limerick, Co Limerick
 - 50) Stepping Out Athlone, National Learning Network, Belhavel, Golden Island, Athlone, Co Westmeath
 - 51) Tabor Lodge, Ballindeasig, Belgooly, Co Cork
 - 52) Tallaght Probation Project, Courthouse Square, Westpark, Tallaght, Dublin 24
 - 53) Tivoli Training Centre, 24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin
 - 54) Tower Programme, Cusack House, St Mark's Lane, Neilstown Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
 - 55) TRAIL, Peter McVerry Trust, 29 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1
 - 56) TREO, Unit 2, Block 4, Lacken Road Business Centre, Kilbarry, Waterford
 - 57) Tuam Community Training Workshop, Vicharschoraland, Tuam, Co Galway
 - 58) Tus Nua, Depaul Ireland, 18 Nicholas Street, Dublin 8, D08 VCP7
 - 59) U-Casadh Project, Solas Building, Belmont Park, Ferrybank, Co Waterford
 - 60) Westview Day Centre (Foroige) (YPP), Westview House, 17 Audley Place, Patricks Hill, Cork
 - 61) Wexford Centre Project (YPP), Unit 7, Liberty Corner, Off James Joyce Street, Dublin 1
 - 62) WHAD (YPP), Cherry Orchard Equine and Training Centre, Cherry Orchard Green, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10.



