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# **Probation Service** Annual Report 2022

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### **Foreword & Introduction**

I am very pleased to present the Annual Report of the Probation Service for 2022 to the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, TD. This report sets out the work and performance of the Probation Service against our key objectives and priorities.

Following two years of COVID-19 disruption, 2022 was another challenging but highly productive year for the Service as we resumed normal operations, whilst delivering an ambitious work plan. The provision of effective services remained top of our agenda to ensure we continued to meet the needs of our clients, our responsibility to the Courts and our commitment to supporting community safety across Ireland.

2022 marks the completion of the second year of our Strategy Statement 2021-2023: Probation Works for Community Safety and I am pleased that we continue to make significant progress in advancing the 106 strategic commitments outlined in the Strategy Action Plan. 68% of all actions are now complete or on track for imminent completion, placing us in a very strong position as we enter our final year of the strategy.

During the year, we continued to experience increasing demand for our services due to a surge in activity across the criminal justice sector post-pandemic. In 2022 we worked with 16,347 people in the community, 2,880 in custody and completed more than 11,800 assessment reports. I wish to commend the efforts of colleagues across the Service for rising to meet this challenge and demonstrating professionalism and dedication to their work.

We acknowledge the notable reduction in community service assessment referrals in 2022 and have made concerted efforts to address this through the completion of an Evidence Review of Community Service launched in December. The Review responds directly to recommendations included in the *Review of Policy Options for Prison and Penal Reform 2022-2024*, published by the Department of Justice earlier in the year, and identifies opportunities to increase awareness, strengthen partnerships and enhance the model of community service in Ireland. The implementation of these recommendations remain a key priority for the Service into 2023.

Significant progress was made during 2022 on structural reform within the Service. Following a period of consultation, we implemented a new senior management structure which encompasses four pillars of strategic responsibility and is designed to help us build capacity in critical areas such as social inclusion, data analytics and community sanctions & service.

We were delighted to contribute to the *High Level Taskforce Report* which was published by Minister McEntee in August and considers the mental health and addiction challenges of persons interacting with the criminal justice sector. This is a milestone report which informs our practice and builds on existing work carried out by the Service. We remain committed to working collaboratively with partners across key sectors to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the report's recommendations in 2023. Finally, like many public sector organisations, in 2022 the Service encountered significant challenges in recruiting talented staff due to the buoyant and highly competitive employment market. Despite this, we held several competitions throughout the year and were successful in attracting 46 new entrants to the Service, including 32 new probation officers. We continued to support and invest in existing staff by delivering an innovative learning and development programme. We also made significant headway in the delivery of our Irish Probation Framework (IPF) with the development of a new practice manual which is planned for rollout to teams across the Service in the near future.

In summary, I am confident that we enter 2023 in a stronger position as a Service to continue meeting our strategic objectives, delivering greater impact across the justice sector and most importantly, producing better outcomes for our clients, their families and wider communities.



Mark Wilson Director

Mal Lol

Mark Wilson Director

## 2022 In Numbers



- <sup>1</sup> 1,105 std. Reports +273 SD Reports + 292 fines Act reports
- <sup>2</sup> 828 PSSSO + 61 PRSO



1,288 Community Service Orders managed, totalling:

<u>174,287</u> 566

Hours of community service work in lieu of

Years in prison, resulting in

€2M

Just under €2 million worth of unpaid work for the benefit of communities nationwide<sup>3</sup>

### **OFFENDER** PROFILE

16% Women

8% Young Persons<sup>4</sup>

4% Men

92% Adults

### **TOP 6 OFFENCES RESULTING IN REFERRALS TO THE PROBATION SERVICE**

÷ 5

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2. Assault

1. Dru

ug	Offences	

4. Public Order

5. Road Traffic

3. Theft

6. Burglary

**Representing 76% of all referrals** 

## 12 months

**Duration of the most frequently** imposed Probation Order





**Duration of the most frequently** imposed Community Service Order

- <sup>3</sup> (Based on the minimum wage in 2022 (€10.20 an hour) and the total number of Community Service Hours, the amount is €1,830,013.50)
- <sup>4</sup> 8% is from 702 referrals for young persons out of the 8,616 referrals in 2022. These include persons under 18 and those managed by YPP teams. See page [75]

## Strategy Statement 2021-23

## **Our Vision:**

Safer and more inclusive communities where offending, and its causes, are effectively addressed.

## **Our Mission:**

To provide services to the courts and wider criminal justice system through the delivery of effective community sanctions.

## **Our Guiding Principles**

- Professional & Accountable
- Transparency & Openness
- Respect & Integrity
- Collaboration & Partnership
- Innovation & Creativity
- Evidence Informed & Data Driven







## **Our Organisation**

The Probation Service is an executive agency of the Department of Justice, committed to working to reduce offending, create safer communities and fewer victims through offender rehabilitation.

The Probation Service contributes towards this by:

- Ensuring court ordered supervision is implemented
- Reducing the likelihood of reoffending and risk of harm to the public
- Making good the harm done by crime through reparation and restorative justice.

The Probation Service delivers the following services:

- Offender assessment, supervision and sentence management
- Community Service and Community Return Schemes
- Young Peoples Probation (YPP)
- Community Partner Initiatives (including Community-Based Organisations funding).

Rehabilitating offenders to achieve and maintain positive change is at the core of Probation Service work. The Probation Service believes that offenders can change their behaviour and through rigorous assessment and effective supervision, probation staff can help make positive changes to avoid further offending. Probation practice is delivered, informed and underpinned by social work practice. Staff have a special expertise in intervening with offenders and in assessing and managing risk.

The Probation Service has over 35 communitybased offices nationwide, with a presence in every county, as well as having staff based in all prisons. The Service is a national service, delivered locally, providing services to courts, custodial institutions and communities across the country. The Probation Service works in close collaboration with the Courts Service, the Irish Prison Service (IPS), An Garda Síochána, the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS), the Parole Board and many organisations in the community.



## Who Are We and What We Do

#### **Our Management Team**

In 2022, the Probation Service established a new executive management structure aimed at supporting the organisation's continued evolution and developing increased capacity to meet the strategic priorities outlined in our Strategy Statement 2021-23. Areas of particular focus include community sanctions & community service, social inclusion, multi-agency & high risk offender management and data analytics.

The new structure was implemented following an independent review of the Service's existing management structures which recommended the introduction of four pillars of strategic responsibility, each of which are overseen by a corresponding deputy director or principal officer.

#### **Our Staff**

The Probation Service is a service-led organisation and the skills, expertise and dedication of our staff is our most valuable attribute. As of 31 December 2022, the Probation Service had a total employee headcount of 421. A total of 46 new staff were recruited in 2022 covering new and existing roles and back-filling roles vacated by leavers. This included:

- 32 new probation officers
- 40 staff leaving the organisation through retirement, resignation or movement to other government departments
- 16 probation officers promoted to senior probation officer grades
- Appointment of 2 deputy directors and 1 principal officer

Recruitment remained a key priority for the Service, however attracting new staff, in particular qualified social workers, was challenging due to heighted competition as result of the full-employment economy environment.

In 2022, the Probation Service initiated three competitions, including:

- Community Service supervisor competition in February
- Deputy director competition in March
- Probation officer competition for Dublin and Limerick in August



Probation Works for Community Safety

### New Starters in 2022

## Mary Prendeville, Executive Officer in Haymarket, Dublin

Mary joined the Civil Service back in 2000 and has held several positions across the Department of Justice. Most recently she spent 7 years working in Forensic Science Ireland before accepting an opportunity to join the Probation Service in April 2022 via an expression of interest opportunity. "I've always had an interest in Probation. When I was training to be a social worker, one of my placements was in probation and I was placed in the midlands prison and absolutely loved it.

"7 years is a long time in the same area and I felt I needed a change in my career for learning, development and career advancement opportunities. I found the Probation Service an extremely friendly and welcoming environment. I settled in quickly into my new post and especially with my new team, we all seemed to work very well together. I could see that this was a busy office. Lots of meetings each day and continuous training sessions for new and old staff. I had a sense of belonging very early on in my move.

A lot of my work involves computer based emails, queries, managing mailboxes, scheduling meetings, managing the diaries for the director and deputy directors. The other major aspect of my role is attendance at directorate meetings and supporting their smooth operation. As part of this process, I am gathering a wealth of knowledge and information in areas that are completely new to me such as strategy, business planning, work plans and policy. This is really refreshing and undoubtedly the best aspect of my role." Michelle Heary, Senior Probation Officer, Young Persons Probation in North Dublin Michelle qualified as a social worker in 2013 and spent 9 years working in TUSLA across various roles, most recently working with children in care as a Team Lead in the Dublin North City. Michelle joined the service as senior probation officer via external competition in October 2022.

"Moving from TUSLA to the Probation Service was a significant change for me. It was definitely a steep learning curve, trying to find your way around new practices and policies while still finding your feet and gaining confidence in a new role. However there are clear crossovers between my work in Probation and TUSLA, families that I would have engaged with – we're dealing with really similar groups of young people. I think it's really important that we work in a very multi-disciplinary - way as well to try and meet the needs of these young people, to address their offending behaviour, to try and look at other areas of their life that we can support them."



My team works unbelievably hard. They are very dedicated, very committed to the needs and outcomes of young people. We're also very conscious that our role is about creating safer communities. We try to think outside of the box and act restoratively – I think that's something that is really important in our role. We consider alternative approaches that will help the young person make good the harm that has been caused."

Johnny Maguire, Probation Officer in Laois/ Offaly Community Team

Johnny spent several years working in TUSLA in the Midlands and the Dublin South Central team before making the move to the Probation Service in June 2022.



"My favourite part of my role is the client work. I love being able to work one-to-one with clients, develop tailored interventions and case management plans." "I really enjoyed my time working for TUSLA but having completed a placement with Probation while college, I always had a desire to come back and work in the criminal justice area. My favourite part of my role is the client work. I love being able to work one-to-one with clients, develop tailored interventions and case management plans. I also really enjoy having a mixed caseload, I work with adults and I have some young people on my caseload. My work spans a wide spectrum of areas including sexual offences, domestic violence and I am regularly in and out of prisons to carry out custody reports. Because the work is so varied you are never stuck at a desk for too long or feel like you're going stale. It's a lovely mix of reports, assessment, and supervision. There is also a good work-life balance which is great!"



### **Our Strategic Pillars:**

This annual report is organised under 5 main headings, corresponding to the strategic themes identified in the Probation Service Strategy Statement 2021 – 2023.

### **1** Enhancing Community Safety

We will enhance community safety by reducing the level of crime and victimisation in our communities through the implementation of high quality supervised community sanctions. 2 Strengthening Collaboration and Engagement

We will work to address the complex issues impacting criminal justice, in cooperation with our criminal justice partners, the broader statutory sector and voluntary and community organisations.

### **3** Promoting Inclusion

We will further strengthen an organisational culture that recognises and supports diversity, integration and human rights; which is reflected in all aspects of Probation Service policy and practice.



### 4 Empowering Our Team

We will invest in our team to promote innovation, learning and well-being, empowering our staff to deliver a high quality, professional service.



### 5 Modernising Our Approach

We will further develop the Service to attain the highest standards of organisational performance and governance.



## **Strategy Statement 2021-23: Our Progress in Year 2**

The Probation Service Strategy 2021-2023 is supported by a detailed action plan with 106 outcome-focused actions that are tracked against the high-level goals set out in our strategy.

The action plan has been developed into a threeyear work plan with 346 targeted Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with clear timelines for delivery. This work plan is reviewed quarterly by senior management and ensures the effective oversight, monitoring and implementation of the Service's high-level goals.

At the end of Year 2 of the strategy, the Probation Service is well on track to successfully deliver on its strategic objectives with 68% of Actions recorded as complete (Blue) or on track for imminent completion (Green) on the 31st December 2022.



### Probation Service Stategy 2021-23 Action Status on 31st December 2022

Action Complete

Action almost complete (>75% complete)

Action started and on-track for completion (<50% com plete)

Action not started (less than 10% complete)

# Pillar 1 Enhancing Community Safety



## **Working with Perpetrators** of Intimate Partner Abuse

"I thought it was normal at the start. I thought a broken finger was ok. This was with my ex-partner that I'm away from now. Now I know it's not ok"

At an event to mark the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence in December, Probation Service staff and external invitees listened to the moving words of Sandra, a woman who had escaped an abusive relationship. Sandra was a client of SAOL – a Probation Service funded project for women in Dublin's north inner city.

Sandra explained how with the support of peers and project workers from SAOL, she found the strength both to leave her partner and to realise that what was happening to her was not 'normal'.

Sandra's advice to others trapped in abusive relationships was powerful, "They will tell you they won't survive without you. But you are surviving them, so I'd advise women in those situations to speak up and get out while they can".

Hundreds of women who died violent deaths in Ireland were remembered at the December event and contributors presented on several topics including stalking, online abuse and domestic homicide processes in Northern Ireland.

In 2022, the Probation Service continued its work with both the perpetrators and the victims of intimate partner abuse. Revised policy and guidelines on intimate partner abuse were launched in February, serving as an updated practice guide to staff working with intimate partner abuse.

In line with the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence (2022 – 2026) the Service committed to make available a 1–1 rehabilitation programme to be delivered by trained staff as an option for men convicted of intimate partner violence. Funding was also secured to underpin the programme with an integrated victim support component to safeguard the partners of men. Collaboration continued with perpetrator programme providers MOVE Ireland and MEND who deliver the 'Choices' treatment programme and the Service contributed to a Department of Justice commissioned review of this programme.

Also in 2022, new probation officers received training in responding to perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse and coercive control, as part of their induction. Established practitioners were upgraded to version 3 of the SARA risk assessment instrument, equipping them to identify victim vulnerabilities in domestic abuse cases, as well as perpetrator risk factors.

Shared learning and international networking took place in Slovakia in September 2022 when the Service was represented at a meeting of the Confederation of European Probation/EuroPris Domestic Violence Expert Working Group. Meanwhile closer to home, links with colleagues in Probation Board of Northern Ireland and Scotland continued to ensure best practice in this challenging field of work.

Deputy Director, Olivia Keaveney [centre] and Carmel Donnelly, Assistant Principal Probation Officer [centre right] at an event for staff in December to mark 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence in Dublin.



## Working with People Convicted of Sexual Offences

"When a man sitting in a circle with seven other men who have committed a harmful sexual offence and they are telling him something, it's very hard to ignore it. When someone in the same boat as him says 'I don't think that's a good idea' and supports him to make a positive step, it gives the person hope".

Sue Casey, Probation Officer, has worked for the Service for 15 years, spending the past 9 years facilitating the Safer Lives Treatment programme for people convicted of sexual offences. She said that working in the programme has been transformative. "It's a different way of working; to get the balance between Probation Service social work and therapy you have to prod and challenge people."

"It's changed how I approach people and communicate with them. You're talking about very heavy, harmful subjects in the group and you have to be able to give people information in a way that they can hear it. You have to be able to roll with their defensiveness, their anger and their hurt, and stick to your guns. It has changed how I can deliver information".

The Safer Lives Treatment programme is a therapeutic group programme based on The Good Lives Model. It is designed to assist men to understand their offending behaviour and the harm it caused, and to develop the knowledge and skills to live a life that is safer for themselves, their families and their communities.

Sue said that she does this work because of her belief in the "magic of group". She said that "when a man sitting in a circle with seven other men who have committed a harmful sexual offence and they are telling him something, it's very hard to ignore it. When someone in the same boat as him says 'I don't think that's a good idea' and supports him to make a positive step, it gives the person hope".

The management of sex offenders in the community is operated via the Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management (SORAM), which is led jointly by An Garda Síochána and the Probation Service with the active support of TUSLA, Local Authority Housing and the Irish Prison Service.

The National SORAM Office (NSO) continued to provide a level of support and oversight to Local SORAM Teams, with the aim of promoting an effective, consistent, and defensible standard of risk management throughout all 28 Local SORAM teams.

During 2022, 210 convicted sex offenders nationally were supervised within the community under the SORAM process.

### Pre-Release SORAM

The National SORAM Office established a Pre Release SORAM (PRS) Implementation Group in order to commence pre-release SORAM meetings for individuals due for release from prison. This will assist their transition into the community from a risk management and integration perspective. The PRS Implementation Group has completed a detailed Standard Operation Procedure which has been endorsed by the National SORAM Steering Group.

During 2022, the PRS Implementation Group prepared for the pilot phase of pre-release SORAM meetings. The National SORAM Office devised two training modules for presentation to prison based personnel who will be involved in PRS meetings. It is envisaged the first modules will be delivered in 2023 followed by the commencement of the pilot phase in Arbour Hill and Midlands Prison.



The Limerick Prison campus at Mulgrave Street

#### Sex Offenders (Amendments) Bill 2021

A positive development has been the publication of the Sex Offenders (Amendments) Bill 2021. Part 14A reference the Assessment and Management Team which is the function of SORAM. It will place SORAM on a statutory basis with the required attendance of the named agencies who are currently involved in SORAM. This legislation has made significant progress in the Oireachtas in 2022 and it is envisaged that it will be enacted in 2023.

### **Working with People in Prison**

The Probation Service has a presence in each of the country's 12 prisons, working as part of multidisciplinary teams supporting reintegration. In 2022, the Service worked with 2,880 men and women in prison.

2022 saw a significant increase in the prison population nationwide. By the end of the year, December 2022, there were 4,300 people in custody in Irish prisons. This represented a significant increase on the previous December when there were 3,800 individuals in custody. This increase in the number of people in custody led to a corresponding increase in the number of people under the supervision of the Probation Service, with 1,700 individuals in custody subject to statutory post custodial supervision orders in 2022.

## Services in Prison Helped Clara Find New Hope

"I came into the prison over a year and half ago. When I arrived, I was an addict, I was very thin. I had no self-esteem or confidence. I was really just a shell of myself. I had no education. You could say, I had absolutely nothing.

The services here in prison have been vital to me. Working with my probation officer and other key workers have helped connect me with supports and has given me confidence to realise that prison isn't just the end of the world. The supports that we receive here in prison are helping me prepare for when I get out. Before I came here I would have been nervous meeting professionals and social workers but my experience in prison has helped me realise that there are people and a lot of services out there that I can access to help me change my life around.

Education in particular has been huge for me. When I came in, I didn't think I would even going to engage but then I saw some of the other ladies who were really involved and I suppose that inspired me. From the moment I started to engage, I have found the teachers to be fantastic. For me prison has been a very positive experience and I have found new hope for my future."

## **Working with the Parole Board**

The newly established Parole Board is an independent, statutory body that considers applications for Parole from prisoners serving life sentences once the prisoner has served over 12 years of their sentence.

In October 2022, the first person in Ireland to be granted a parole order was released from custody. This person was released from Loughan House open prison in Co. Cavan and is now living in the community in the south east of the country.

The new Parole Board was set up under the Parole Act 2019 and became operational in late 2021. Probation officers began submitting reports to the Board in early 2022. These reports are very thorough, as this is the first time individuals will have been before the Parole Board. They address attitude, offending history, risk factors, social history and pre-release planning. The individual's insight into the impact of their offending is also central to assessments.

A new departure under the Parole Act 2019 is that if the person released on a parole order begins to struggle in the community their probation officer may apply to the Board to either vary or revoke the order.

Eligible prisoners, who have served more than 12 years of a life sentence, are eligible to apply for parole. For the first time, an individual applying for parole is entitled to legal representation. As the victim's voice is central to the process, the victim's family is also entitled to address the Parole Board and have legal representation.

# Unlocking the Potential of Community Service in Ireland

During 2022, with the relaxation of the COVID restrictions, community service sites reopened and resumed activity nationwide. Community service work recommenced in schools, hospitals, community settings, mobile bus sites and also on sites supported by community based organisations funded by the Probation Service. These partnerships were key to the successful resumption of community service operations during 2022. Partnership with the Irish Red Cross continued too, with the organisation's peer led Culture of Non Violence programme rolled out for people on Community Service orders/Community Return in Dublin and Westmeath. This partnership will continue into 2023. An external operational review of Community Service was conducted in 2022, building on an evidence review carried out in 2021. This marked the second phase of a three-step review of Community Service aimed at maximising its potential as an effective community based sanction. The operational review saw engagement by staff, individuals on community service orders and external stakeholders including the judiciary, host organisations, An Garda Síochána and the Courts Service. The focus of the review is how best to develop a partnership approach to Community Service and how to embed principles of desistence, restorative justice and social justice into the system.

In 2022, the Probation Service managed 1,288 Community Service orders.

## Benefiting Host Sites & Communities Nationwide

Testimonials from host organisations, including schools, youth and family services, sports clubs and charities testify that the work done by Community Service teams is hugely valuable and important to them. Community Service supervisors are highly regarded by host sites and the work done by the teams is work that, in many cases, would not be completed were it not for the Community Service teams, particularly at a time of low unemployment. Activities include horticulture, grounds maintenance, clean up initiatives, building, painting and general maintenance.

### Host Testimonial: Mid-West Simon

The charity Mid-West Simon has been working with the Probation Service Community Service team in Limerick city since 2018. The charity has food banks in Limerick and Clare and a key part of their work is providing food parcels for families and individuals facing challenging circumstances. The charity prepares the food parcels at their warehouse on the outskirts of the city and transports them to various drop-off points in the wider region. Probation Service clients under Community Service Orders are part of a team working at the Mid-West Simon warehouse processing and sorting donated food items into individual food parcels.

Jenny Walsh is the Food Bank and Distribution Coordinator with Mid-West Simon in Limerick and she explains the importance of the Community Service team to the work the charity is doing,

<image>

"Without their help we wouldn't be able to continue the service. We don't have the manpower to pack and process that number of parcels every week. Their help is invaluable to us and to the wider community".

### Client Testimonial – Tom's experience

Tom was sentenced to 240 hours of Community Service in lieu of 5 months in prison. He was nervous about the prospect of doing his hours but his experience with the Probation Service team in Dublin turned out to be a very positive one. Tom completed his hours at Cherry Orchard Equine Centre. He had been out of work for several year before his conviction but describes his time in Cherry Orchard as "...a gateway back into the workforce". Every Saturday he would report for work at the centre and having to turn up regularly, and spend all day on the job, got him back into the habit of working, "I loved my work but I could never see myself getting back into employment... doing my community service hours changed that".

He even made some positive connections on site; while completing his hours at the equine centre, Tom worked alongside a young man who happened to be an apprentice electrician. Tom ended up hiring him to do some work for him on building projects he managed and the pair still work together occasionally. Tom explains that completing his Community Service gave him a very strong sense of giving back to the community for the harm he had done, "I felt that something good came out of my mess that I was able to give something back to society and it got me out of a deep depression that I was heading in for".



Cherry Orchard Equine Centre, a Community Service host site in Dublin

### **Partnering to Deliver Community Return**

"Community Return provides an important incentive for people in custody to comply and address their offending behavior. It is also important for their families and it can help build trust again. For example, by highlighting that a person has achieved something of significance while in prison, this can often signal to families or their loved ones that they have made positive change and have reflected on the harm caused by their previous actions."

Governor Perry, Irish Prison Service In 2022 there were 176 people released from custody as part of the Community Return scheme. Overall compliance rates with the Community Return scheme remained high during the year (91%) and the Service oversaw 153 Community Return completions during the year.

COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and all sites returned to full capacity as per pre-pandemic operations. The removal of restrictions resulted in a greater variety of site work being available and a return to sites in communities that had previously been suspended during lockdowns.

The continued partnership between the Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service to manage all stages of the Community Return scheme has been critical to ensuring its efficient, effective and safe management. "Community Return is effectively a handover from the Irish Prison Service to the Probation Service. It is a continuation of supervision in custody to the community, and close collaboration between both agencies is essential to its continued success. This involves good communication, flexibility and mutual respect for our respective core objectives. We are both working towards one aim which is to reduce reoffending and prevent further harm caused through crime."

"From a prison officer's point of view, it really opens your eyes to the fact that you are just one part of a much broader criminal justice system. For every person that comes into prison, a person has to come out of prison. If that process is structured and managed, it is proven to be very effective. We have a fabulous working relationship locally with our Probation Service team. This helps open our eyes to the supervision community, which is a whole different challenge. If we understand that challenge, we can then better prepare the prisoners, which will ultimately increase their chances of succeeding when transitioning to the community."

Governor Perry, Irish Prison Service





# Pillar 2 Strengthening Collaboration & Engagement



## Addressing the Harm Caused by Crime through Restorative Justice

During 2022, the Service continued to embed restorative justice principles and interventions into supervision practice via the work of the dedicated Restorative Justice and Victims Unit. The unit provides leadership and support for the consistent and integrated provision of a range of restorative justice models, including family/ restorative conference, offender reparation panel, victim offender mediation and 'bespoke' restorative interventions.

Training was a specific focus for the unit in 2022. It delivered victim awareness training for staff and conducted a regional roadshow to raise awareness of restorative justice interventions, models of practice and promote its integration into assessments and client management plans.

In 2022 the Probation Service also provided €637,500 in funding to four community-based organisations to provide dedicated restorative justice programmes. These include Restorative Justice Service in the Greater Dublin Area and Restorative Justice in the Community in the Laois, Offaly and Tipperary region. The Cornmarket Project offers Restorative Justice interventions in the Wexford region and a Restorative Justice Project Worker with Le Chéile provides to service to the South West Region and Limerick region. A number of other projects also provide restorative justice interventions as part of a wider suite of services to offenders.

## Update from Restorative Justice in the Community:

"I believe that Restorative Justice can offer victims a satisfying experience of justice. Bringing together all those affected by crime creates opportunities to understand, respond, repair and collectively create just outcomes."

Emily Sheary, Manager at Restorative Justice in the Community

During 2022, Restorative Justice in the Community (RJC) continued to offer a restorative justice service in community based offences and facilitated restorative encounters involving victims and offenders. RJC also worked to build connections with new referring judges and Probation Service teams.

During the year, RJC also contributed to the discussions of the High Level Taskforce on the Mental Health and Addiction challenges of persons interacting with the criminal justice system. Through those discussions, RJC developed a pilot proposal for a restorative justice initiative in partnership with An Garda Síochána. RJC has secured funding for the pilot and hopes to commence the programme in 2023. RJC hopes that the pilot can demonstrate additional opportunities for restorative justice within the criminal justice process.

## 'Working to Change' Strategy - Supporting Social Enterprise via the Kickstart Dormant Accounts Fund

In June, 25 social enterprises across the country – from Mayo to Wexford and from Cork to Leitrim – were awarded funding totally over €1m from the KickStart Dormant Accounts Fund. This funding is used to support social enterprises providing training and employment for people with a criminal justice history with the aim of reducing reoffending and improving community safety.

Amongst the recipients that secured funding were 'Sailing into Wellness' a nationwide project that, through the platform of sailing, works with participants to help introduce and improve a wide variety of their skills including team work, leadership, decision making, resilience and coping mechanism.

Sailing into Wellness is using its KickStart funding to part fund the employment of a Business Development Manager responsible for developing the organisation and increasing its traded income.



The Dormant Accounts Action Plan 2023 was launched in November at the Cherry Orchard Equine Centre by the Minister, Heather Humphreys TD, Minister of State, Joe O'Brien TD, Minister Jack Chambers TD and Minister Anne Rabbitte TD

It currently employs one person with a criminal justice history. The project is also targeting the creation of two additional positions for people with histories of offending.

## Breaking Barriers to Education via the KickStart Scholarship

Also in June the KickStart Scholarship, a groundbreaking third level scholarship for people with criminal convictions went live. The new scholarship which was established by the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service was developed to support people with a criminal justice history who face financial challenges in accessing Higher Education.

The KickStart scholarships meet a strategic objective of the Department of Justice 'Working to Change' Social Enterprise and Employment Strategy 2021-2023. Coordination of the scholarship is led by Maynooth University which is working in partnership with 3 other institutions - Dublin City University, Dundalk Institute of Technology and Technological University of the Shannon Midlands Midwest, Athlone Campus (MEND Cluster1).

In late 2022, 8 scholarships were allocated under the KickStart scheme, 2 per each Higher Education Institute, as follows:

- One scholarship of €5,000 per year for undergraduate study to a maximum of €20,000 over 4 years for a full-time course, or 6 years for a part-time course.
- One scholarship of €1,250 for each year of undergraduate study to a maximum of €5,000 over 4 years for a full-time course, or 6 years for a part-time course.

In launching the scholarship, Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, TD, said,

"I am really pleased to be in a position to support this important new initiative which is about giving people a second chance and empowering those who want to change the course of their lives for the better. We know how powerful education can be in terms of unlocking potential, building confidence and breaking down barriers and this new initiative is about ensuring equality of opportunity for those who may have made mistakes in the past but want to build a better life."



Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, TD with Probation Service staff during her visit to Haymarket in April.

## **Reopening Our Doors**

As COVID-19 restrictions were removed in the early part of 2022, the Service was delighted to reopen its doors once again to visitors, partners and colleagues from across the sector. In addition to the resumption of a busy events schedule, the Service facilitated a number of visits from key officials across the sector.

Highlights included:

### Visit by Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, TD

In April, Minister McEntee visited Probation Service HQ to meet with the Executive Management Team and front-line colleagues. The visit provided an opportunity to update the Minister on current priorities and developments, including the new management structure, the ongoing review of community service, work in respect of tackling intimate partner violence and the Irish Probation Framework (IPF). The Minister also met with members of the Women's Strategy Working Group to discuss their work.

### Visit by Minister of State at the Department of Justice, James Browne, TD

In October, Minister Browne visited the Service to meet with colleagues and the Executive Management Team. A core focus of the visit was on Youth Justice and the Minister met with several members of the YPP Team and representatives from three youth-focused community based organisations; Deonach, We Have a Dream (WHAD) and The Wexford Centre Project.

### Visit by Secretary General Oonagh McPhillips

In June, the Secretary General paid a visit to Haymarket to meet with the Service's newly appointed Executive Management Team and to discuss ongoing strategic priorities within the Justice sector. A significant part of the visit involved informal meetings with colleagues on the office floor and the Secretary General thanked staff for their work and dedication during the challenging pandemic period. The visit also included a meeting with members of the Working Group on Intimate Partner Violence, followed by a round table discussion with three community based organisations; Candle Community Trust, SAOL and Treo, Port Lairge.

### Visit by Sinn Féin Justice Committee Representatives

In April, the Service was pleased to facilitate a request by Deputies Pa Daly, TD, and Martin Kenny, TD, to meet with the members of the Executive Management Team. Both Deputies sat on the Justice Committee at that time and were keen to receive a general overview of the work of the Service and its key strategic priorities. Areas of wider discussion included restorative justice, managing repeat offending and the work of funded community based organisations.

## **Collaborating with PBNI – An All-Island Approach to Community Safety**

"I am pleased that partnership between Probation Board of Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Probation Service continued throughout 2022 with a strong emphasis on information-sharing, joint training initiatives and collaborative strategic planning. We know that increased co-operation will reduce crime and reduce reoffending throughout the island of Ireland and keep all communities safer. Much work has been undertaken in the area of gender-based violence, hatecrime and supports for victims, these are areas of mutual interest that will continue to be prioritised into the future."

Amanda Stewart, Chief Executive of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI)

### **Information Sharing:**

The Service signed two separate informationsharing protocols with PBNI aimed at supporting continued cross-border collaboration and confirming both organisations' commitment to complying with data protection legislation in the respective jurisdictions. The first protocol related to the secure and confidential sharing of information for the preparation of court-mandated Pre-Sentence Reports. The second protocol related to information exchange necessary to coordinate and strengthen the supervision and management of individuals convicted of sexual offences and those assessed as significant risk of harm in the community.

### Public Protection Advisory Group:

The PPAG is a committee under the Intergovernmental Agreement, bringing together senior representatives from police, prison, probation and criminal justice policy units from the north and south of Ireland. In 2022, significant progress was made in respect of the work plan.

The Probation Service continued its close working relationship with colleagues in PBNI and participated in a variety of shared initiatives of mutual interest. Key highlights in 2022 included:

### North/South Seminar on Hate Crime

In October, the Probation Service hosted a seminar on Hate Crime in collaboration with PBNI. The seminar explored the structural roots, dynamics and impact of Hate Crime and was aimed at developing an all-island dialogue on this issue. Practitioners from PBNI and the Probation Service were invited to participate in this shared learning opportunity, which included leading academics from University of Limerick, Maynooth University and Ulster University.

### **PPAG 13th Annual Seminar**

In November, the Probation Service hosted the 13th Annual PPAG Seminar in Haymarket, marking the first time in three years that the Seminar was held in person. In recognition of the new blended way of working and to facilitate increased participation from front-line staff, the seminar was also delivered in hybrid format for the first time, with a live stream link issued to each of the six participating PPAG agencies.

The theme for the seminar was 'Delivering a quality frontline service' which was selected due to its relevance to all justice agencies as they emerged from the extremely challenging COVID-19 pandemic. The seminar provided an opportunity for colleagues to stop and reflect on collective learnings and included presentations on a variety of topics including human trafficking, managing the increasingly complex needs of clients, young people in custody and partnership with communities. Most importantly, the seminar provided a welcome opportunity for colleagues, North and South, to network in one room again and to engage in discussion on areas on mutual interest and concern.

## Marking a New Chapter for the Irish Probation Journal

"From the readership point of view, people want research and academic pieces but they also want to know what is happening on the ground. They want to know how the research is being put into practice. That's why the journal is so important – it bridges the gap between research and practice."

Ursula Fernée, Assistant Principal Probation Officer of the Restorative Justice and Victim Services Unit, was the joint-editor of the Irish Probation Journal (IPJ) for five years, finishing as editor in 2022 following the publication of the Journal's 19th edition.

"It was a real privilege that people gave me access to their thinking. The role of editor can be very intrusive in many ways, so I always felt very privileged that people welcomed my input". Ursula said that the IPJ is a testament to the work of the Probation Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI). "It is an expression of both Service's commitment to evidence-based practice and shared learning and a really positive and enduring example of all-island cooperation and collaboration on criminal justice issues as envisaged in the aftermath of the 1998 Peace Agreement".

The 19th edition of the Irish Probation Journal was launched by the Probation Service and PBNI at the annual Public Protection Advisory Group (PPAG) Seminar, which was held in the Probation Service Headquarters in November 2022.

The themes in the 19th edition included youth offending, transitions from custody, collaborative working, desistance, restorative practice, un-adjudicated domestic violence, and human trafficking.

The 'Writing for Publication' workshop was held again in January 2022. This annual workshop, delivered by members of the editorial committee, brings together potential and existing authors to explore the writing process from the author's initial idea, through theme development to the production of the final paper.

Ursula encouraged staff to get involved with the IPJ, saying that it is "an opportunity to support career development and share experiences of practice – the good, the bad, and the ugly. Practitioners themselves benefit from reading about initiatives and research undertaken by colleagues in Ireland but also across Europe and beyond".

### **Article spotlight**

Ronan McLoughlin, Assistant Principal Probation Officer for Young Persons Probation, speaking about the IPJ article Car Crime: A Young Man's Game by Ashling Golden of SOLAS:

"This is an insightful exploration of what has become a prevalent and growing concern within the Youth Justice space. Ashling's piece advocates for a deeper comprehension of car crime; urging consideration to its roots within relationships, cultural influences, developmental stages, and the young people's journey for acceptance and identity. Young Persons Probation welcomes the deepening of understanding in the area of car crime and the need to respond in ways which are reflective of this."

## **Building Connections across Europe and Beyond**

In 2022, Gerry McNally, Assistant Director of the Probation Service, finished a six-year presidency of the Confederation of European Probation (CEP). During his time as President, Gerry was instrumental in placing a spotlight on the Probation Service and strengthening relationships with partners and other services across Europe.

Speaking about his position as President of CEP, Gerry said,

"It has been an honour and a privilege to have served as President of the Confederation of European Probation (CEP) between 2016 and 2022, and to have contributed to the Board and the work of CEP. CEP has, throughout my time, been the leader in the development of criminal justice interventions and services in the community in Europe, and across the world. CEP celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2021 and I am confident that CEP will continue to be a strong network and support for its members and the voice for probation in Europe."

### **Electronic Monitoring Conference**

In May, the CEP held the 12th European conference on Electronic Monitoring in Finland. The event was attended by nearly 230 participants from 36 different jurisdictions worldwide. Presentations included the Finnish approach to electronic monitoring, and the ethical use of electronic monitoring.

## Work with Perpetrators European Network Annual Conference

Carmel Donnelly, Assistant Principal Probation Officer, gave an opening address at the Working with Perpetrators European Network (WWP-EN) Annual Conference in August. The theme of the conference was From Harm to Hope: Youth Interventions against Domestic Abuse.

In her address, Carmel acknowledged the important role played by the NGOs, particularly MOVE Ireland and the Men's Development Network. She said the NGOs "contribute to a coordinated community response to domestic abuse in this country, a response that puts the victim at the centre". "The Probation Service has a long history of collaboration with such NGOs. We value interconnected ways of holding perpetrators to account whilst supporting them to change."

### 14th CEP General Assembly and Conference on Human Rights and Ethics in Probation

The 14th CEP General Assembly took place in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in October. Gerry McNally gave his final address as CEP President and handed over the position to Annie Devos from Belgium.

Participants from 35 countries attended plenary sessions and workshops on topics such as Ethics and Social Justice, vulnerable probationers, psychological support in probation, and diversity management.

### **The CoPPer Project**

The Probation Service partnered with CoPPer – the Cooperation to Promote a European Volunteering Programme in Probation Services. CoPPer is a project that aims to create and improve social models that support the values of European unity and solidarity.

The project proposes to train volunteers in the community to provide informal support, advice and guidance to people subject to probation. They can act as a stepping-stone for the clients' social reintegration by motivating them for behaviour change, helping them to enhance their competencies, access adult education opportunities, look for a job, or to represent a prosocial model.

The CoPPer project began on 1 December 2022 and will run until 1 December 2025.

### World Congress on Probation & Parole:

The Director, Mark Wilson and Deputy Director, Una Doyle attended the Fifth World Congress on Probation and Parole "No One Left behind: Building Community Capacity" which was held in Ottawa, Canada, from 28 September to 1 October 2022.

Professionals and leading academics from all parts of the world came together for the 5th World Congress on Probation and Parole in Ottawa, with 320 delegates and participants attending from over 30 countries. The theme of the congress, No One Left Behind, emphasised the shared commitment to reach out to and include marginalised groups of people at the centre of the work of probation and parole authorities.

Gerry McNally, Assistant Director of the Probation Service and President of the CEP, delivered opening remarks at the congress and made a roundtable presentation on The Irish System and the Origins of Parole. The congress included speeches and workshops covering the treatment and rehabilitation of people who have offended who are subject to probation supervision, respecting and protecting human rights, and working for a safer and better society for all.

Gerry McNally, Assistant Director and CEP President at the Opening of the World Congress on Probation & Parole in Ottawa in September.





Fíona Ní Chinnéide, Director of Operations (Prisoners & Reintergation) at the Probation Service and Stephen Hamilton Director of Operations at PBNI with speakers from the the North-South Hate Crime Seminar held in in Haymarket in November



Una Doyle, Director of Effective Practice with renowned academic, James Bonta at the World Congress on Probation & Parole in Ottawa in September



Olivia Keaveney, Director of Operations (Courts & Community) with colleagues from CoPPer at the launch in December in Utrecht



Oonagh McPhillips, Secretary General of the Department of Justice meeting with Probation Service staff during her visit to Haymarket in June



Michelle Richardson, Assistant Principal Probation Officer speaking as MC at the 13th Annual PPAG Seminar in Haymarket in November

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# Pillar 3 **Promoting Inclusion**



## **Working with Women**

### International Women's Day (March)

International Women's Day is an important date in the Probation Service calendar. It provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women, especially those in the criminal justice system who are striving to meet a range of personal and social challenges in order to make positive changes in their lives. For the Probation Service, "the establishment of a solid, respectful and empowering relationship is a core part of our work with women" – Fíona Ní Chinnéide, Director of Operations (Prisoners and Re-integration).

On International Women's Day 2022, the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service co-hosted a webinar entitled Investing in Knowledge to *'Break the Bias'*. The webinar included live input from women in custody in Limerick Prison. Helen, Limerick Prison, said

"I'm a changed person. I think prison and my education has changed me for the better and I look forward to progressing more".

### Women's Strategy Group meet with Minister McEntee (April)

Minister McEntee met with the Women's Strategy Group in April. The Group provided an overview of the Service's work with women, particularly around the community response to women's offending, the issues of homelessness, and engagement with the Judicial Council.

### **Evaluations of Tús Nua and Outlook**

The Probation Service is acutely aware of the challenges faced by women who offend. In late 2022, evaluations of Tús Nua and Outlook commenced. Tús Nua, managed by De Paul Ireland, works closely with the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service to support female offenders reintegrate into the community on their release from custody and provides accommodation for 15 women.

The Outlook Programme, run in joint partnership with the Probation Service and managed by Focus Ireland, provides accommodation and structured community supports for women leaving prison or on Probation Service Supervision.

### ACJRD 25th Annual Conference

In October, the Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD) held its annual conference. The focus of the 2022 was 'Gender Encounters in the Criminal Justice System: How does Gender Impact Diverse Experiences?'

Ursula Fernée, Assistant Principal Probation Officer, presented on '*Recognition and Responsivity: Adapting the Lens for the Supervision of Women in the Community*'.

### **Seeking Safety Training**

In November, the Women's Strategy Group, in partnership with the Learning and Development team and colleagues in the SAOL Project, hosted training on 'Seeking Safety – Treatment Manual for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Substance Abuse'. The author, Lisa Najavits PhD, Professor of Psychiatry at the Boston University School of Medicine, delivered the training.

This training supports the Probation Service commitments identified in the report 'Towards a best Practice approach to Working with Women' (June 2021) as well as commitments and proposals that were referenced and endorsed in the 'Review of Policy Options for Prison and Penal Reform 2022-2024'.

## **Our Work with Young People**

In 2022, Young Persons Probation celebrated 15 years working with some of the country's most vulnerable young people. At an event in Portlaoise in September probation officers with expertise in this area came together to mark this 15-year milestone and showcase the important work they do.

Bernadette Hickey, Probation Officer, focused on YJARC – the Youth Joint Agency Response to Crime and presented a case study centered on a young man from Dublin – 'Client A'. Client A's story highlights all the complexities and potential successes of this approach to persistent offending.

Client A was first referred to the Probation Service in late 2017 when he was 16 and on remand at Oberstown Detention Campus. His charges included theft, assault and criminal damage and he was eventually sentenced to 12 months supervision. It was decided he was a suitable candidate for YJARC as he was persistently coming to the attention of the Gardaí in the local area. During his supervision period his risk of offending reduced. Then, in 2018, Client A was given another 12 month supervision period relating to a robbery committed in 2017. His offending escalated and resulted in a custodial sentence of 2 years and 2 months in December 2020. A 12 months post release supervision period was also ordered.

The YJARC team continued to work on Client A's case, referrals were made for him to community based organisations working with young people and his family was also supported. When he was in custody, Client A was supported by the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service. He remains on YJARC and his offending behaviour has reduced significantly.

### YPP Highlights 2022:

- The development of the Probation Service's response to knife crime got underway
- 3 probation officers were seconded one day a week to work with National Inter Agency Prevention Programme (NIAPP) where they co- facilitate treatment programmes for young people who have who exhibited sexually harmful behaviour or have sexually offended.

Young people participating in outdoor pursuits programme with community based organisation, WHAD.



- Probation Service funded community projects Le Chéile and Céim ar Chéim co-facilitated Restorative Justice conference training for all probation officers working with young people.
- YPP facilitated a number of Family Conferences. This is a court ordered meeting with the young person, members of their family, the victim or victims and other relevant people in order to develop a plan to prevent repeat offending and make good any harm caused.
- The Probation Service's Child Safeguarding Policy was reviewed.

In 2022, the Probation Service received 702 court referrals for young people. On receipt of the referral, the Probation Service prepare detailed pre-sanction reports and make proposals to the court. In 2022, the Service received 665 referrals for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports. In keeping with the ethos of the Children Act 2001, every child/young person that the Probation Service work with is afforded the opportunity for engagement at the lowest level of intervention possible to keep them and the community safe. Detention is a measure of last resort.

In 2022, 9 young people received a detention and supervision order. Young people are detained at Oberstown Children Detention Campus, where probation officers work with them during their detention. Officers also work with and support these young people when they return to the community. Oberstown and the Probation Service proactively identify any young people in detention who may benefit from an early return to the community. A number of young people benefited from early return in 2022.

## **Working with the Traveller Community**

In 2022, the Probation Service worked on a number of important initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for members of the Traveller Community engaged with the criminal justice system.

"2022 marked another year of solid collaboration and partnership between the TJI and the Probation Service. We have seen positive developments and outcomes, in particular the commitment to deliver a culturally competent service which we believe will improve outcomes for Travellers. We look forward to continued close collaborations with the Probation Service in 2023."

Anne Costello, Coordinator of the Traveller Justice Initiative (TJI)

### Ethnic Equality Monitoring (EEM) Practice Guidelines

Ethnic Equality Monitoring (EEM) Practice Guidelines were launched for staff in the Probation Service in 2022. EEM is the process of collecting, recording and analysing data from clients relating to their ethnicity. EEM helps to identify and measure if a service is responding to everyone equally and ensure that a service is meeting the needs of a diverse population including ethnic minorities. The Probation Service worked with TJI and Pavee Point to develop EEM Practice Guidelines to support frontline staff in collecting ethnic data and to ensure an understanding of a human rights compliant approach to ethnic equality monitoring.

EEM training was organised by the Learning and Organisational Development Unit to upskill a significant number of staff in EEM, and this training will continue in 2023.

## Staff Training on Traveller and Roma Inclusion

The Probation Service and TJI developed short video clips with Travellers who were clients of the Service to speak about their experience of the Service, and barriers and enablers to positive outcomes. These videos are used for staff training.

The clients highlighted the importance of not judging people based on their membership of the Travelling Community, and to focus on each client individually. One client said, "don't give up on people. There is so much diversity in Travellers, we're not all the same. Some will spin the line and try to get away with things but others are going in genuinely looking for help. I think it's important to work with the person in front of you and not judge based on what someone else has done in the past".

They also emphasised giving clear explanations of what will happen during the Probation process. "If I was going to give a probation officer advice about working with a Traveller, I would recommend that you have a chat with them and tell them what's going to happen. I think it's good for a probation officer to explain to the client – 'I am not working against you. I have to do a report but I am with you and want what's best for you'".

### **Red Cross**

A Traveller woman with experience of imprisonment was facilitated by the Red Cross and the Probation Service to deliver Community Based Health and First Aid training to Travellers in Canal House. Peer-to-peer support for people with experience of the criminal justice system is a powerful tool for others who are struggling to make changes in their lives.



Colleagues participating in joint training delivered in conjunction with Pavee Point on Traveller and Roma Inclusion.

## **Probation, Podcasts and Positive Mental Health**

On 10 October 2022, the Probation Service marked World Mental Health Day with a special event – *Probation, Podcasts and Positive Mental Health* – in the Lighthouse Cinema, Smithfield.

"We had six working class people on stage, all with different experiences, stories and skills. It was the first time I have attended an event that allowed people to freely discuss the reality of situations."

Dr Sharon Lambert, UCC School of Applied Psychology A panel discussion, in front of a live audience, featured a cast of well-known podcasters who regularly discuss mental health issues in their podcasts and who often touch on issues related to criminal justice. The audience included those with lived experience, practitioners from the Probation Service and community-based organisations funded by the Probation Service.

The Two Norries Podcast, Talking Bollox Podcast, Senator Lynn Ruane, Dr. Sharon Lambert (UCC) and Laura Cotter (Senior Probation Officer, North East) all spoke on the panel. The event was the first of its kind for the Probation Service was chaired by Director of Operations (Prisoners & Reintegration), Fíona Ní Chinnéide. It provided an opportunity for people to engage and speak openly about issues surrounding mental health and the criminal justice system in Ireland.


Attendees at the the Probation, Podcasts and Positive Mental Health event in the Lighthouse Cinema in October.

"It was a very progressive talk," said Terence Power of the Talking Bollox Podcast. Timmy Long of the Two Norries said that "one of the biggest things to take away from [the event] is this – the Probation Service are actually looking at areas like this as a benefit. There's a massive change in the criminal justice system in this country at the moment, whether people know it or not". Dr. Sharon Lambert praised the event, saying that it was a "conversation that was real, raw, insightful and funny". The event built on research commissioned by the Probation Service and carried out by Psychologist Dr. Christina Power. 'Moving Forward Together: Mental Health Among Persons Supervised by the Probation Service' looked at mental health amongst people supervised by the Probation Service. The study indicated that at least 40% of people on probation supervision in Ireland present with symptoms indicative of at least one mental health problem. This compares with 18.5% of the general population.

# Welcoming the High Level Taskforce Report on Mental Health & Addiction Challenges

In September, the Probation Service welcomed the publication of the report and recommendations of the High Level Taskforce established to consider the mental health and addiction challenges of people who come into contact with the criminal justice sector. The report, which was published by Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee and the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly was established to ensure the critical mental health needs of people in custody are met, addiction treatments are provided and appropriate primary care supports are available on release. The Director of the Service was pleased to act as Chair of one of three sub-groups contained within report which examined community issues including through-care on release from custody. A core objective of this sub-group was to ensure there are sufficient safeguards in place and adequate provision of services to prevent individuals from relapsing into damaging behaviours, undermining the rehabilitative efforts made by the individual and the State. In speaking about the publication of the High Level Taskforce report, Mark Wilson, Director of the Probation Service, said, "The publication of the High Level Taskforce report is a significant milestone for the Service on pushing forward to find solutions to the complex areas involved in relation to mental health in the criminal justice

"It is widely recognised that Probation Service clients and those who are engaged with the criminal justice system typically experience significantly higher levels of mental health and addiction challenges than the wider public. It is therefore crucial that we work collectively with partner agencies to address the root causes of offending behaviour if we are to prevent reoffending, create stronger and safer communities and to reduce crime. sector. I would like to acknowledge and thank the many Probation Service colleagues who contributed to the work of the Taskforce. We as a Service are committed to ensuring the report's recommendations will be implemented and continue to collaborate with partner agencies in this regard."

# Increasing Our Collaboration with the Central Statistics Office

In early November, the Probation Service was delighted to expand its existing partnership with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) with the launch of a new statistical release entitled *The Earnings Background of Probationers 2014-2020*. This was the CSO's first analysis to examine the earnings and employment records of people on probation compared to the general population and provides valuable insights that inform probation practice.

#### **Key Findings:**

- Median weekly earnings for probationers are up to 30% less than those of the general population.
- 64% of individuals who received probation orders during the timeframe examined are not active in the labour market.
- The gap in earnings between probationers and the general population narrows over time – from 30% in 2017 to 20% in 2020.
- Probation re-offenders tended to have lower weekly earnings than those who didn't re-offend.
- Women on probation earn one third less than men on probation. This gender gap is significantly higher than in the general population.

Speaking about the launch of the new study, Felix Coleman, Statistician in Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics at CSO commented,

"The new studies relating to the background income and employment of probationers have been developed as a result of an engagement and feedback process with our stakeholders in the justice domain. There is a strong demand from policymakers to understand the background of offenders and re-offenders in order to provide optimal and holistic policy solutions. In addition to these needs CSO's have also been able to develop their statistical capability with a more developed use of administrative data provided by other government departments. The CSO has a good productive relationship with the Probation Service and work in partnership to review, communicate and improve the quality of statistics developed in relation to individuals under probation supervision. The CSO intends to continue to develop statistics about individuals linked to probation supervision by providing regular updates to our existing publications on income and employment and to further develop statistics related to probationers relationships with the areas of health, housing and education."

Further details on The Earnings Background of Probationers 2014-2020 report is available via the CSO website

# **Probation Re-offending Statistics 2018**

Also in November, the CSO released its latest Probation Re-offending Statistics publication which provides information on the level of recorded re-offending by individuals placed under the management of the Probation Service. The

28%



In 2018, under one-third (28%) of individuals that received a probation order re-offended within a year of receiving the order in comparison to 36% for the 2008 cohort.

# 2016

Over 50% of the 2016 cohort did not reoffend within 3 years. Re-offending by those sentenced to probation supervision in 2016 was 48% after a 3-year period compared to a figure of 55% after 3 years for the 2008 cohort. This represents a 7% reduction in re-offending.

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Younger people continue to have a much stronger tendency to re-offend, 41% of under 18s linked to re-offending incidents compared to 17% of over 65s.

# 2018

For the 2018 cohort the overall male re-offending rate is 27% compared to 26% for the female cohort.

Re-offending rate for those on Post Release supervision is 16% for the 2018 cohort. Community Service is 25% and Probation Order Supervision is 33%. information in this publication primarily relates to individuals who entered Probation Service supervision in 2018.

Key highlights from the study include:



The 2016 three year re-offending rate is 1% less than the 2015 three-year re-offending rate.



-1%

Under two-third (36%) of young male adults (<25 years) did not re-offend compared to over two-thirds (27%) of young female adults (<25 years) who did not re-offend.

36% 🛉 27% 🛉

Most re-offences take place in the six months following the probation order. Almost two-thirds (68%) of re-offences by those on Probation in 2018 re-offended within the first six months.

6 Months

The Mid-East (21%) which consists of counties Kildare, Louth, Meath, and Wicklow had the lowest regional levels of re-offending. The Mid-West consisting of counties Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary and the South-West consisting of counties Cork and Kerry had the highest level (34%) of one-year re-offending for the 2018 cohort.



# **Driving Social Inclusion across our Organisation**

In 2022, the Probation Service introduced an Assistant Principal Probation Officer post for Social Inclusion and Re-Integration. Rachel Lillis was appointed to the role and oversees the development and implementation of new structures to support the social inclusion objectives of the Service.

Rachel has worked with the Probation Service for 20 years. Prior to her role as Assistant Principal Probation Officer for Social Inclusion, she worked as an SPO with numerous community and prisonbased teams including Dublin North West, the Dóchas and Shelton Abbey, the Northside Assessment Team, Wheatfield Prison and YPP Northside and PO with YPP and St. Patrick's Institution.

In speaking about her new position, Rachel said,

"Criminal behaviour is often underpinned by social and health factors, including low educational attainment, substance misuse, homelessness, poor mental health, trauma, unemployment and poverty. We believe that these social inclusion factors can be responded to more effectively and this is why the Social Inclusion function was established - it will oversee the effective co-ordination and implementation of our work in this area,"

The Social Inclusion and Re-integration Unit will have a national responsibility for driving policy change across the organisation.

"Our objective is to support work with individuals by effecting structural and policy transformation. We are moving away from the thinking of offender rehabilitation solely as one of individual treatment to reduce criminogenic risk. The social context of criminal behaviour must be understood, and these issues need to be considered through a lens of intersectionality".



Rachel Lillis, Assistant Principal Probation Officer

# **Community Based Organisations in Action In 2022**

The Probation Service is aware that alone it cannot address all of the needs of individuals who have come into contact with criminal justice system. Recognising the unique and added value the voluntary and community sector plays in supporting desistence from offending, the Probation Service provided €17.532 million of funding to community based organisations (CBOs) across the country to develop and deliver services to offenders in their communities last year.

These organisations, working alongside the Service, provide a diverse range of services, including training and education, offender management programmes, support to access accommodation, drug and alcohol treatment programmes, and access to employment opportunities. These services and programmes are also a very important step in the re-integration of an offender back into their local community.

2022 saw the emergence of the country from COVID-19 and government restrictions. While this enabled community organisations to return to deliver services and programmes to Probation Service clients, the medium to long term of COVID will have on clients will need to be fully evaluated in due course. However, the sector faced other challenges including increased utility and living costs. Following submissions to the Government, an additional €1m was made available for community based organisations in 2023.

This Annual Report provides an opportunity for the Probation Service to formally acknowledge the work of all its funded organisations for their work and support over the last year. The following is a snapshot of highlights in the life of some of the funded CBOs in 2022.

#### Key highlights from CBOs in 2022:

#### The Bridge Project Celebrates 30 Years

Meeting the needs of people with a history of offending has always been at the heart of everything that the Bridge project, based in Dublin city does and in April the project celebrated its 30th anniversary.

Always innovative - many of the Bridge programmes aimed at working with individuals who have persistently offending are now being used nationally, both by the Probation Service and others - this was a great opportunity to celebrate the project and hear directly from service users, like Jason, a former Bridge client and now a UCD graduate, about the power of changing lives:

#### TREO Port Láirge – Ministerial Visit

"I was walking around the (prison) yard and it just finally hit me. I remember saying to myself, I can't do this anymore, the battle is over. I can't live outside and now I can't live inside prison. So I just knew then and there then that I needed to change. And since then, like that's five years ago now, I haven't looked back since"

Minister Helen McEntee, TD, got some useful tips on motor maintenance when she visited the TREO Port Láirge project at their premises on the outskirts of Waterford city in May.

Working with approximately 100 Probation Service clients in 2022, TREO provides a variety of programmes, interventions and activities to individuals in Waterford city, including education and training, community service and restorative justice interventions.

Minister McEntee joined with local District Court Judge Kevin Staunton to present certificates to clients who had completed education and training courses at TREO.

#### Céim ar Cheim Certificate Ceremony

Céim ar Chéim, located in the heart of Moyross in Limerick city was buzzing with excitement in June for its annual certificate ceremony. Young people from the city were awarded certs for completed education and training courses, and some also received their Gaisce awards on the day.

As well as hearing from some of the teenagers who attend Céim ar Chéim, the project's co-founder Seán Moriarty – a former Probation Officer, now in his eighties – also spoke at the event.

Céim ar Chéim continues to do great work with young people from Limerick city and beyond.

# IASIO Ten Year Report and Compass Launch

One of the longest-running Probation Service funded organisations, IASIO, had several reasons to host an event at Probation Service HQ in Smithfield in June. The launch of the organisation's ten-year report, a chance to say a formal goodbye to Paddy Richardson, who was stepping down as CEO of the organisation.

The event brought Probation Service and Irish Prison Service colleagues together as well as the Minister for Justice Helen McEntee, TD and the incoming IASIO CEO, Sharan Kelly. This was Paddy Richardson's last day in the job after many years working with the organisation.

The Compass website was also launched at the Haymarket event; *theCompass.ie* is an online directory of community support services for individuals affected by imprisonment or convictions, and their families.

Churchfield Community Trust & Garden Café

Churchfield Community Trust is a Probation Service funded project based in Cork city providing support, training and reintegration services to individuals aged 18 - 35 who have offended. In September, the project welcomed Oonagh McPhillips, Secretary General at the Department of Justice to visit its newly renovated premises on the north side of the city. Fantastic work has been done at the projects HQ by community service participants.

Lunch was in the Garden Café in Blackpool, a social enterprise staffed by clients of Churchfield Community Trust who want to gain experience and re-enter the jobs market. The café sits overlooking the city and provides training and employment for people living in the local community.

#### **Candle Campus Redevelopment**

Doing crucial work with young people in the Ballyfermot area of Dublin city, the Candle Trust marked the redevelopment of its campus in October. The project is located in the heart of Ballyfermot and features a sensory garden, treatment rooms and a beautiful light filled central area that can facilitate larger groups.

Candle provides structured education and training programmes, as well as other services for young people, some of whom have come into contact with the criminal justice systems and others who face challenging circumstances in their lives. The project's approach to working with young people is underpinned by its key methodology of the Trauma Recovery Model.

Minister James Browne, TD, who has responsibility for Youth Justice performed the official opening of the redevelopment and captured the essence of Candle's work in his speech:

"Candle Trust is all about making impactful connections. It's about connecting young people with new ideas, with each other and with the wider world. This campus will enable and support that".



Céim ar Chéim participants at the annual certificate ceremony in Limerick in June



Minister McEntee and District Court Judge Kevin Staunton present training certificates to Treo Port Lairge participants in May



Artwork created by women in the Limerick Prison in recognition of International Women's Day 2022



Probation Service Women's Strategy Working Group meeting with Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, TD during her visit to Haymarket in May 2022



Minister McEntee at the launch of the IASIO Ten Year Report and Compass website in Haymarket in June.



# Pillar 4 Empowering Our Team



## **Recognising the Work and Efforts of Colleagues** at the Probation EPIC Awards

Staff across the Service were celebrated for their efforts in transforming lives and reducing the risk of reoffending at the 2022 Probation EPIC Awards held in Dublin in September.

EPIC stands for 'extraordinary people inspiring change' within the Probation Service and there was no shortage of worthy candidates. The EPIC Awards are aimed at encouraging and inspiring colleagues to strive for excellence in service delivery and to continue delivering the best possible outcomes for Probation clients, their families and wider communities.

More than 50 nominations were received for the 2022 Awards which were evaluated by an independent judging panel, chaired by Emeritus Associate Professor, Hilda Loughran (UCD). Awards were granted across 6 categories including Enhancing Community Safety, Coaching & Inclusion, Collaboration & Engagement, Rising Star, Innovating Our Service and the COVID-19 Special Recognition Award.

Some examples of this year's winning projects include teams and individuals who demonstrated excellence in the complex resettlement of people convicted of sexual offences, restorative justice practice, mental health advocacy and interventions for clients. Deputy Secretary, John O'Callaghan from the Department of Justice, delivered a keynote address during the event and thanked colleagues across the service for their resilience and dedication to service delivery during the pandemic period. Speaking during the awards ceremony, he added

"The Probation Service offers unique value to the criminal justice system, offering hope to individuals, families and communities by providing structured pathways to rehabilitation and reform. This make a real difference to public safety and many of the people recognised in the awards tonight have made a significant contribution to making Ireland safer, fairer and more inclusive."

#### Spirit of Probation Award 2022

In 2022, the Service introduced the 'Spirit of Probation Award' which recognises an individual, or individuals who capture that spirit of dedication, commitment and resilience that the Service represents.

The 2022 award was granted to Maura O'Looney and Charles Langan, former long-serving members of staff who both made a significant and positive impact on clients and the development of the organisation during their time working for the Probation Service.

Probation EPIC Awards Ceremony in Dublin the September.



# **Preparing to Implement the Irish Probation Framework (IPF)**

Comments from Probation Service colleagues about their hopes and ambitions for the supervision framework:

"The framework has the potential to make a huge difference to the way the Service supervises its clients. Once fully implemented, the Service should see a reduction in reoffending rates and increased satisfaction rates among probation officers and clients as they the realise potential for change. In addition, the general public and victims of crime will have increased confidence in the Services ability to provide quality supervision." "The framework will provide a scaffolding for evidence-based probation practice that is responsive to the individualised risk, needs, strengths and circumstances of those who are referred to the Probation Service."

> "It will provide a greater structure for staff in how they work with clients. The quality component will hopefully help managers and probation officers focus on the quality and effectiveness of the work."

"The most significant impact will be for our clients. I believe that the IPF will result in their increased buy-in into the supervision process. It will assist with partnership working and lead to a reduction in risk and offending."

The new supervision framework is a bespoke model of probation practice that is evidence informed, underpinned by research and aims to deliver the best possible outcomes for clients, stakeholders and the wider community. A core focus for 2022 was the development of key resources to enable and support staff to translate the Framework into practice.

#### Key 2022 highlights include:

#### • Core Probation Skills Training:

As part of the implementation of the framework, the Service is committed to ensuring that probation officers are trained, supported and confident in delivering an effective service to clients. In 2022 the Service continued its rollout of the Core Probation Skills training which is focused on six key skillsets: *relationship building skills; role clarification; pro-social modelling and reinforcement; cognitive behavioural intervention; problem solving and motivational interviewing.* 235 members of staff have received training in Core Probation Skills since beginning the roll out in 2021- 2022.

• Launch of Probation Service Toolbox: In April, the Service launched the Toolbox, a new online resource hub for staff which provides learning supports, links to relevant policies and information to support colleagues in their day-to-day practice with clients. The idea for developing a Toolbox was suggested by a member of staff during a previous consultation session and its delivery in 2022 was a significant milestone for the Service as it prepares to implement the framework. The Toolbox was launched via an all-staff webinar and several resources, including a demonstration video and FAQs document, were prepared to assist staff in navigating the new system. The Toolbox is managed by the Learning & Development Unit, which has incorporated the new resource within its wider training programmes.

• Development of Practice Manual:

The principal focus of 2022 was on the development of the Practice Manual, a crucial resource for staff which will provide practical guidance to probation officers in implementing the Framework in their day-to-day practice. The manual was developed by Velia Ltd, in close collaboration with Probation Service staff, a process that was driven by the principle of co-production. This ensures the manual is rooted in Irish probation practice while informed by international best practice. Six dedicated working groups were established to support the initiative and were instrumental in bringing the manual to a final stage of development during the course of the year. The Practice Manual is expected to be published in 2023.

• Development of an Identifiable Brand: In November the Service commissioned a design agency to develop a new, clearly identifiable brand for the supervision framework. The agency consulted with the Steering Committee and other members of staff to develop a brand that would resonate with staff and deliver maximum impact. A key output of this consultation process was the decision to adopt a new name which will be launched in 2023 alongside the publication of the accompanying Practice Manual.

# **Addressing the Learning Needs of our Organisation**

In 2022, the Learning & Development (L&D) Unit responded to identified skills needs and new legislative developments by delivering an ambitious training and development calendar for staff via a mixture of online and in-person formats.

#### Key highlights include the delivery of:

- Three induction programmes for new staff to respond to several intakes of new probation officers and senior probation officers.
- A new training programme focused the emerging issue of gambling addiction
- A suite of training programmes aimed at meeting strategic objectives in relation to intersectionality, diversity and neurodiversity.
   For example, the L&D Unit introduced training on hate crime, ethnic data collection, cultural competency and delivered a number of sessions on working with the Traveller Community.
- Training on complex topics such as working with perpetrators of sexually harmful behaviour who present with an intellectual disability

#### Substance Misuse is not the Only Choice

In December, the L&D Unit delivered a 4-day, inperson cognitive behavioural training programme with the Cognitive Centre, entitled 'Substance Misuse is not the Only Choice'. This training initiative responds directly to emerging training needs and reflects on the findings of the Probation Service report, 'Informing and Supporting Change; Drug and Alcohol Misuse among People on Probation Supervision in Ireland' by Dr. Louise Rooney which was published in 2021.

This training programme provided front-line probation officers with an opportunity to become certified in the delivery of a one-to-one accredited programme with clients who present with substance misuse issues and offending behaviour whilst under probation supervision. Gerard O'Callaghan, Probation Officer in Cork North Team:

"As part of a Probation team that works primarily with homeless clients, this training was particularly relevant to working with people with addiction issues. The underlying reason for most of our client group offending and reoffending is their addiction, so any knowledge and training that will help respond to this problem is invaluable.

The training helped me develop a greater understanding of addiction issues, some of the underlying causes and how best to respond to these with the client. It was also very a very collaborative programme which required the client and probation officer to work together." Beatrice Aleshinloye, Probation Officer in Tipperary Team:

"The programme provided me with structured intervention tools such as targeting criminogenic attitudes and offenders' values to reduce risk and harmful behaviour of clients, to themselves and others.

I was able to further develop key skills in a variety of areas including the use of appropriate communication skills, relationship building, nonjudgmental attitudes, problem-solving, assertiveness in challenging offending behaviour, awareness and management of client's anti-social behaviour.

I completed this programme as a new entrant in Probation Service and I have continued to use the learnings in my practice. The learnings are adaptable to different offending behaviours and offenders' risk and needs."

### **Embracing the World of Blended Working**

In 2022 the Service introduced a new *Blended Working Policy* which was adapted from the Department of Justice Blended Working Policy and is closely aligned with the Blended Working Policy Framework for Civil Service Organisations. The new policy was tailored to support the specific business needs of the Service and nurture high-performing teams, while also providing greater work flexibility for staff.

Following a period of consultation with staff, it was recognised that not all positions within the Service were suitable for blended working to the same extent. The Service therefore adopted a team-based approach and managers were asked to consider blended working in the context of how the distribution of work meets the needs of their team. All teams completed Team Charters which provided an opportunity to discuss and record the practical arrangements of each team and to consider and agree the enabling commitments that will support the team.

Following this, colleagues were invited to apply for Blended Working via the National Shared Services Office website. In addition to the application, colleagues were asked to complete a mandatory online training module and self-assessment survey related to Home Workstation Ergonomics to support their successful remote working set-up. There was a significant response from colleagues in respect to Blended Working, with 334 staff members approved to participate in the scheme in 2022. The Service has committed to conducting a review of the policy after six months and ergonomics assessments will be conducted by the Health & Safety Unit in 2023.

"My role as HEO for several units means that I am often called away to deal with matters while working in the office, which can distract from other softer tasks such as report writing or policy work. Blended Working provides me with the opportunity to work on these tasks in a quiet, private and distractionfree environment. Social burnout is also a factor for me, and Blended Working allows me to recharge my social battery so that I can work and communicate more effectively with my team and colleagues when I return to the office." "I applied for Blended Working because I recognised the benefits to my work life balance during the pandemic, predominantly in terms of spending less time commuting and I wanted to replicate this post COVID. It is highly beneficial from a professional perspective because I can fully concentrate at home without distractions which is useful for certain tasks.

**Communication is also easy thanks** to technology; if I need to speak to colleagues I use instant messaging or Zoom with ease. I think having access to ergonomic assessments ensures that Health & Safety is taken seriously too. I've benefitted from accessing a suitable equipment such as a chair, laptop riser, gel pads and keyboard. Ultimately, the new Blended Working **Policy demonstrates the Service's trust** in us as employees, which is welcomed by staff. In my experience, when colleagues are working remotely it usually means they are working harder and in my opinion more efficiently."



Dale Murphy, Higher Executive Officer, Corporate Services



Kim McDonnell, Senior Probation Officer, Tipperary Team



Director, Mark Wilson with retired staff members, Maura O'Looney and Charles Langan who received the *Spirt of Probation* Awards at the Probation EPIC Awards



Ger O' Callaghan, Probation Officer received his certificate of completion from Amy Forde (left), Trainer on the Substance Misuse is not the Only Choice programme



Olivia Keaveney, Director of Operations (Courts & Community) presenting at the Probation EPIC Awards in Dublin in September



Beatrice Aleshinoye, Probation Officer received her certificate of completion from Amy Forde (left), Trainer on the Substance Misuse is not the Only Choice programme



Probation EPIC Awards Ceremony in Dublin in September

5

# Pillar 5 **Modernising Our Approach**

# **Expanding our Capability in Data Analytics**

In May 2022, the Probation Service appointed Frank Humphreys to a new position as Senior Data and Analytics Manager within the recently established Data and Research Unit. Prior to joining the Service, he ran the Labour Market Analytics Unit in the Department of Social Protection.

"My new role is to set up and lead a Data and Research Unit. The creation of the new role and unit significantly expands our capacity to analyse data, and it reflects our commitment to datainformed decision-making and a datadriven culture, with an emphasis on quality assurance and outcomes. Our statistician, Supritha Subramanian, currently on secondment from the CSO, is a vital member of the new team, who has complementary skills and has been enormously helpful." "My priorities in my first 6 months included understanding the existing quality, organisation and usage of data within the Probation Service and identifying opportunities for change. Data has tremendous potential to support and inform the work of our staff to change lives and make communities safer. So, a second priority was to promote understanding within the organisation of the centrality of data to the mission, vision and strategy of the Probation Service."

"Over the next 12 months, the Data & Research Unit will be looking for opportunities to improve how we manage and use data, from small to systemic changes. We aim to extract new insights, develop metrics, and support and encourage greater use of data for decision-making, with the ultimate goal of optimising the collection, use and communication of data and information in order to improve outcomes."



## **Developing New Information and Referral Exchange Protocols with MEND and MOVE Ireland**

In 2022, the Probation Service developed a revised information exchange protocol with MOVE Ireland and MEND to support referrals to the CHOICES programme. CHOICES is a Department of Justice approved group-work programme that is delivered nationally by trained MOVE Ireland and MEND programme providers. The new information exchange protocol was developed to promote a multi-agency approach to challenging and supporting men who are abusive in their intimate relationships to change their behaviour. Central to this protocol is a commitment to work in partnership with all agencies.

"There is a long and positive relationship between the MEND Programme and the Probation Service both locally and nationally. The new protocol provides a framework for building confidence in the referral process between the two organisations with a potential to improve outcomes for the men attending the programmes but more importantly for the partners/ex-partners and children of those men. Our ambition would be that workers in both organisations become familiar with the protocol and see it as a support not only for interagency communication but also as a component in the process of change in which the men partake."

John Doyle, Director of Services, Director of Services, Men's Development Network & MEND Programme Crucially the revised protocol was developed to reflect existing GDPR obligations and includes the publication of Data Sharing Agreement between all organisations. This work was led by the Probation Service's Information Unit, which worked directly with the Data Protection Commission to ensure aspects of the protocol are compliant with existing legislation.

The information Unit co-ordinates and manages information requests relating to Freedom of Information (FOI), Data Protection, and other information requests. In 2022, the unit managed 100 information requests. These included:

Requested Managed by the Information Unit in 2022	
Freedom of Information Requests	22
Subject Access Requests	13
Third Party Requests	42
Other Requests outside of FOI/ Data Protection	23
Total	100

"The Referral and Information Exchange Protocol is vital for the work between the probation service and MOVE Ireland. It provides clear guidelines for staff as to who undertakes what roles and how to work in conjunction with the probation service. As Tri-Partite meetings are promoted in the new protocol, this will develop both established, and new relationships going forward with the Probation service and MOVE Ireland. Together we can challenge men to take accountability for their behaviour which may in turn reduce offending and decrease risk as a result."

Lisa Brown, Interim Coordinator of Move Ireland

# **Communicating the Impact of the Work of the Service**

Established in July 2021, the Communications Unit plays a key role in raising awareness of the work of the Probation Service and building its reputation both regionally and nationally by positively positioning the Service among internal and external stakeholders. As a relatively new unit, 2022 was an important year of growth for the unit as it expanded its operations and worked towards meeting strategic targets.

#### Key updates include:

#### • New Staff Portal:

In May, the Unit launched the new staff portal aimed at providing increased opportunities to share news and updates across the organisation, whilst also giving staff easy access to digital tools, resources and applications they need in their day-to-day work. The new internal communications tool was modeled on the Department of Justice Portal and was developed in conjunction with the Information Management and Technology Operations team. Feedback from staff in relation to the new portal has been very positive and 110 portal articles were published since its launch on the 9th May.

# • Launch of Communications & Engagement Strategy 2022-23:

In October, the Service launched a new Communications & Engagement Strategy aimed at communicating the impact of the work of the Service to key internal and external stakeholders. The Strategy is informed by the Probation Service Strategy Statement 2022-23 and centres around five key pillars including: 1. Increasing Public Awareness; 2. Enhancing Internal Engagement; 3. Strengthening Relationships with Stakeholders; 4. Harnessing Digital Technology; 5. Enhancing Service User Voice. A detailed action plan was developed to support the delivery of the Strategy which was approved by the Executive Management Team.

#### • Expanding the Team:

In 2022, the Service appointed two new positions to support operations within the unit; Aoife Kavanagh joined the Service in April as External Communications Specialist and Gráinne Jones, transferred from her position as Administration Officer in the Department of Justice Transparency team in October to act as the Service's new Internal Communications Lead. The work of the Communications Unit is overseen by Tom Redmond, Assistant Principal for Communications who was appointed in 2021.

*"I joined the Probation Service in October"* to help meet its strategic priorities in respect of internal communications. The Service has more than 400 employees working across the country and it is important that each member of staff feels connected, valued and informed, so they can carry out their work in an effective and motivated manner. A large part of my job involves showcasing the fantastic work of our colleagues who are so dedicated to supporting change and making our communities safer and more inclusive. I look forward strengthening engagement so we can continue to improve the employee experience and contribute to a culture of openness and trust."

Gráinne Jones, Administration Officer & Internal Communications Lead



• Invigorating Our Events Programme:

A key objective of the Communications & Engagement Strategy is a commitment to innovating the Service's approach to how it uses events to present its work. Significant progress was made in this area during 2022 as it delivered an ambitious calendar of 10 events over the course of the year. The Service adopted online and hybrid formats, attracted high-profile personalities, explored new venue options and embraced social media.

#### • Media Relations:

The Communications Unit has a central role in conveying the work of the Probation Service to the media as well as the wider public. This is a core objective of the Communications & Engagement Strategy and in 2022, the Service made significant progress with substantial coverage in local and national news.

Some highlights include:

- Launch of KickStart Scholarship Fund, 22nd June – article featured on RTE Online
- Launch of KickStart Scholarship Fund, 23rd June
  news feature on FM104
- Homelessness and former prisoners, featuring interview with Senior Probation Officer, Neil McFadden, Aug 20th – article in Irish Times
- Community Service report featuring Limerick CS Team, Oct 7th – feature on RTE Radio One
- Restorative Justice and the Probation Service, Nov 25th – article in Irish Examiner
- <u>CSO Reoffending Statistics, Dec 1st article in</u> thejournal.ie
- Breaking the Cycle of Reoffending, Dec 5th article in Irish Times

#### Public Accountability & Transparency:

In 2022 the Communications Unit oversaw the 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.

Information Requests coordinated centrally			
Parliamentary Questions	133		
Media	7		
Other*	84		
Total	224		

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

# Making Energy Reduction and Sustainability a Priority for the Service

As a public sector body, the Probation Service is obliged to meet the targets outlined in the Government's Climate Action Plan 2021 (CAP2021)<sup>5</sup>, namely a 50% improvement in energy efficiency and a 51% decrease in carbon intensity by the end of 2030. Energy consumption for the Service is monitored by the Corporate Services and Finance units and reported annually to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

Data collected for 2022 showed an overall increase in total energy consumption for the

Probation Service, from 2,783,896kWh in 2021 to 3,550,489kWh in 2022<sup>6</sup>. This increase is understandable, given the organisation's return to full operational capacity as we emerged from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic; as staff returned on a more frequent basis to offices as part of their blended working arrangements, fresh air ventilation was a priority in offices nationwide to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. Staff travel and diesel/ petrol consumption also increased significantly, as staff once again began to move around the country following restrictions on travel in 2021.

#### 2022 EnPI = 11,091 <u>kw/h</u> Target EnPI = 7,529 Employees Actual Target Glidepath 20,000 15,000 10,000 5,000 0 2010 2013 2015 2016 2018 2019 2011 2012 2014 2017 2020 2021 2022 2009 2023 2024 2025 2026 2028 2029 2030 2027 Level 2 Energy Performance Indicators (2022) Electricity = 7,825 FTE Employ 2.1% worse than 2021 8.0% worse than 2021 Thermal = 2,705 Kw/h 19.3% better than 2021 26.3% better than energy efficiency baseline Transport = 561 FTE Employees 47.3% improvement required by 2030 107.6% worse than 2021 (Souce: SEAI)

**Energy Performance Indicators – 2022** 

Despite these increases in consumption, the Probation Service continued to make progress compared to its baseline year, with a 1,905,937kWh reduction in energy usage observed since 2009.



#### 29.2% less than energy efficiency baseline

### 159,747 kWh more than 2021

An energy audit of the Service's largest energy users was undertaken in July of 2022 by an external contractor; five offices were captured in this audit, Haymarket, Tallaght, Westview House, St. Nicholas Church and Cork St. The energy audit focused on energy efficiency in the selected buildings and consisted of in-depth interrogation of energy usage, 1,905,937 kWh less than energy efficiency baseline

systems and management to provide us with an overview energy profile of each office. This audit identified several energy efficiency opportunities, some of which have already been implemented such as motion sensor LED-lighting in Haymarket toilets, and some of which will need to be reviewed in 2023. Oversight and Governance Arrangements



# **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 our governance practice the Probation Service, with the Department of Justice, put in place an Oversight Agreement 2020 – 2022 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2022. Both agreements are published on the Department's website.

The Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) sets out the Probation Service's key targets for 2022 (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 PDA is monitored through at least three formal Governance meetings per year between the Department and the Probation Service. These meetings consider, as required:

- Delivery of the Probation Service Strategic Plan and its annual business plan(s);
- Progress against the targets and indicators set out in the annual PDA;
- Financial management and budgetary matters;
- Human resource issues including staffing, training and industrial relations matters;
- Risk management;
- Any internal governance-related issue;
- Any matter relating to the Probation Service that might have been the subject of, or might give rise to, public commentary or scrutiny;
- Any matter that might impact on the reputation of the Probation Service;
- Any other matter comprehended in, or arising from, this Agreement.

In line with Appendix A of the 'Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies – Business & Financial Reporting Requirements' and the Oversight Agreement 2020 – 2022, reporting requirements are as follows:

- The Probation Service confirms that there were no derogations from the applicable provisions of the Code of Practice
- 2. The Probation Service Risk Management Committee has responsibility for assessing and reviewing principal risks included in the Probation Service Risk Register in accordance with the Probation Service Risk Management Policy 2020. 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 management reports to the Director of the Probation Service and the Executive Management Team.
- The Probation Service confirms that it adheres to the relevant aspects of the Public Spending Code and has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement policy and guidelines and confirms that during 2022 these were complied with.
- 4. A Compliance Statement for 2021, 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 Helen McEntee August 2022. Appendix 2 sets out the Statement on the Probation Service System of Internal Controls for 2022.

The following are the key performance targets and outputs for 2022 with 2021 comparatives. These targets were set at the beginning of the year to assess the performance of the Probation Service in terms of output, efficiency and effectiveness:

#### Quantitative targets

Output area or initiative	Target	2022 Outturn	2022 Target	2021 Outturn	2021 Target
Court-ordered Pre- Sanction Assessment Reports	% of adult PSARs submitted within 8 weeks	54%	70%	New Metric	New Metric
	% of total young person reports submitted within 28 days	100%	100%	100%	100%
Assessments of offenders for the Parole Board	% of assessment reports submitted to the Parole Board within 12 weeks	58%	100%	New Metric	New Metric
Efficient & effective delivery of the Community Service	% of Community Service assessments completed as same day assessments	16%	15%	9.31%	10%
	Community Service reports completed	1,670	2,300	2,044	2,000
Risk-based approach to supervision relating to working with sexual offenders	SORAM used to manage sex offenders assessed as moderate or high risk	100%	100%	100%	100%
Supporting sentence management and reintegration of imprisoned offenders	Engage with prisoners in custody	2,880	2,500	2,730	2,000
	% successful Community Return completion rate	91%	90%	95%	85%

Output area or initiative	Target	2022 Outturn	2022 Target	2021 Outturn	2021 Target
Victim services	% of victim queries responded to within 2 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%
Delivery of services to offenders through Community Based Organisations	Probation Service clients engaged with by core funded adult and all young persons probation (YPP) CBOs: % of SLA target numbers met*	87%	80%	New Metric	New Metric
Ongoing professional development and training for all staff	Internal training events delivered to front line staff	97	75	82	85
Induction of new probation officers	% of new probation officers inducted within 16 weeks of commencing employment	95%	90%	95%	95%

Core funded Adult and all Young Persons Probation (YPP)
 Community Based Organisations represents 78% of the
 Services to Offenders 2022 budget allocation (subhead A9) of
 €17,532,000.

#### **Other targets**

Action	Associated Strategic Pillar	Target Timeframe	Qtr 4 2022 Update
Complete and publish Probation Service policy on victims	Strengthening Collaboration and Engagement	Q1	Complete
Develop a marketing and communications strategy	Modernising our Approach	Q2	Complete
Complete evidence review of Community Service policy and models of practice Commence review of Community Service operating model	Enhancing Community Safety	Q1 Q4	Complete Review at final stages
Review and revise Domestic Violence Policy and Guidelines Review all policy and procedure documents relating to working with sexual offenders	Enhancing Community Safety	Q2 Q4	Complete In progress
Develop protocols with Parole Board for management of parolees	Enhancing Community Safety	Q2	Complete
Develop a Restorative Justice Action Plan to progress the options and objectives identified in the RJ paper (2021)	Strengthening Collaboration and Engagement	Q2	Complete
Develop an Offender Supervision Framework Manual of Practice	Promoting Inclusion	Q2	Complete

# **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 Account Act, 1997, the following information is provided in respect of the financial period ending December 31st 2022:

#### **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	1	40.05
Over €317	2	136.00
Total	3	176.05

# **Public Sector Duty Action Plan 2022-23**

In 2022 the Probation Service published a two-year *Public Sector Duty Action Plan 2022-23* which sets out key actions it will undertake to ensure there is culture of respect for equality and human rights among Probation Service staff and for the people to whom it serves.

The action plan addresses the Service's responsibility as a public sector body (under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014) to take proactive steps towards eliminating discrimination, promoting equality, and protecting human rights, in its daily work.

The Service established a dedicated working group which identified and prioritised areas for action around its Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty for 2022 and 2023. The working group will report on developments and achievements to the public in an appropriately accessible manner.

# **Meeting Our Children First Requirements**

The Probation Service is committed to keeping children safe and promoting their welfare and best interests. In line with this commitment, in March 2022 the Service published a revised Child Safeguarding Statement and Policy & Procedures which directly supports the Children First Act 2015. The revised documents outlines the Service's responsibilities in relation to child safeguarding and give practical guidance to colleagues on professional and safe practices when working with children.

The new Policy Statement & Policy was communicated and shared with all staff and key stakeholders. Both documents are on prominent display in all Probation Service offices nationwide.

## **Protected Disclosures**

There were no Protected Disclosures relevant to the Probation Service in 2022.

### **Customer Service**

The Probation Service Customer Service Charter is available via the Probation Service website. Three customer complaints were received by the Service in 2022.

# **Reporting On Our Performance**

# **Finance Statements 2022**

#### Financial Statement Income & Expenditure 2022

		Budget Estimate	Supplementary Estimate	Estimate and Supplmentary	Provisional Outturn	Savings	Excess
		€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
<b>VOTE</b> 24	JANUARY- DECEMBER 2022						
A7	Salaries, Wages and Allowances	24,855		24,855	24,331	524	
A8	Operating Expenses (Travel, Postal & Telecom, Office Premises, Office Machinery)	4,885		4,885	4,305	580	
A9	Services to Offenders Assistance to Voluntary Bodies (Current)	17,532		17,532	17,503	29	
A10	Community Service Order Scheme	3,105		3,105	2,524	581	
	TOTALS	50,377		50,377	48,663	1,714	

		Budget Estimate	Supplementary Estimate	Estimate and Supplmentary	Provisional Outturn	Savings	Excess
		€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
VOTE 24	JANUARY- DECEMBER 2021						
A7	Salaries, Wages and Allowances	24,499	(800)	23,699	23,308	1,191	
A8	Operating Expenses (Travel, Postal & Telecom, Office Premises, Office Machinery)	4,885		4,885	4,141	744	
А9	Services to Offenders Assistance to Voluntary Bodies (Current)	17,532		17,532	17,529	3	
A10	Community Service Order Scheme	3,075		3,075	2,527	548	
	TOTALS	49,991	(800)	49,191	47,505	2,486	

#### Financial Statement Income & Expenditure 2021

# **2022 Statistics**



# Overview

As part of our effort to continuously improve data quality, we have revised some figures for 2020 and 2021, where reports for Community Service under the Fines (Payment & Recovery) Act 2014 had been counted under Pre-Sanction Reports rather than Community Service Reports.

#### **Overview of Referrals to the Probation Service**

	2020	2021	2022
Total number of Persons dealt with in Community over year*	15,537	15,448	16,347
Total court referrals to the Probation Service	6,661	8,201	8,616
Total number of persons referred from Courts to the Service.	6,059	7,277	7,508

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

#### New referrals from court

	2020	2021	2022
Total Court Referrals	6,661	8,201	8,616
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	4,138	5,121	5,592
Orders without prior report	739	1,059	1,331
Referral for Community Service Reports	1,320	1,192	1,016
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	464	822	676
Family Conference		7	1

#### New referrals from court 2022 % of total







#### **Completed Reports**

	2020	2021	2022
Total Completed Reports	11,689	12,219	13,708
Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports*	9,366	10,013	11,814
Community Service Reports (Standard)*	1,362	1,615	1,105
Community Service Reports (Fines Act)	546	237	292
Community Service Reports (Same Day)	256	192	273
Reports on Life Sentence Prisoners to IPS	87	107	159
Parole Board - Assessment and Home Circumstances Reports	55	44	51
Repatriation Reports provided to the Department	9	8	12
Victim Impact Reports	8	3	2

 \* 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.

# **Supervision**

Supervision (Orders)	2020	2021	2022
Total Supervision Orders made during year	5,363	6,677	7,496
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	1,698	1,964	2,503
Orders for Supervision during year (Probation Orders)	1,124	1,453	1,451
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	759	1,213	1,355
Community Service Orders	1,161	1,360	1,288
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders	572	618	828
Post Release Supervision Orders Made	28	52	61
Other Orders	21	10	9
Family Conference	-	7	1
Number of persons convicted of a sexual offence supervised in the community*	429	461	535
Number of persons serving a life sentence, supervised in the community*	115	128	122

\* Figure is for the total persons supervised over the year

#### Supervision in 2022 % of total




#### Durations of Probation Orders made in 2022 (months)



Number of Months

# **Community Service**

	2020	2021	2022
Total Reports considering Community Service	1,784	2,014	1,692
Referral for Community Service Reports	1,320	1,192	1,016
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	464	822	676
Of the Referrals for Community Service Reports			
Community Service Reports (Fines Act)	546	237	292
Community Service Reports (Same Day)	256	192	273
Community Service Orders made	1,161	1,360	1,288
Includes Community Service Orders (Fines Act)	171	195	206
Total number of Community Service Hours ordered in lieu of custodial sentence	162,829	203,306	174,287
Total alternative sentence in years that would otherwise have been served	593	713	566



## Durations of Community Service Orders made in 2022 (hrs)

Number of CSO Hours

## **Community Return and Prisons Work**

#### **Community Return**

	2020	2021	2022
Number of persons that commenced over the year	287	218	176
Number of successful completions over the year	263	226	153
Number of persons on Community Return on December 31st	86	66	73

#### **Prisons**

	2020	2021	2022
Total number of persons dealt with over the year	2,730	2,730	2,880
Includes:			
Number of new persons serving a sentence in contact with Probation Service	363	435	475
Number of persons on PSSSO's in prison on December 31st	837	843	1,026
Number of persons in prison for a sexual offence on December 31st that have been in contact with the Probation Service	345	382	424

## Age / Gender breakdown of new Court Referrals

		Gender		
Age Category	Total	Male	Female	Female %
Total	8,616	7,232	1,384	16%
12-17	516	475	41	8%
18-24	2,088	1,890	198	9%
25-34	2,862	2,350	512	18%
35-44	1,973	1,557	416	21%
45-54	795	635	160	20%
>54	382	325	57	15%

## **Females Referred to the Probation Service**

#### **New Referrals from Court**

	2020	2021	2022
Total Female Referrals	1,093	1,273	1,384
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	642	790	915
Orders without prior report	121	184	219
Referral for Community Service	267	168	164
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	63	131	86
Family Conference	-	-	-

### **Supervision (Female Offenders)**

	2020	2021	2022
Total	780	996	1,128
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	237	320	400
Probation Orders	229	270	282
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	118	193	205
Community Service Orders	167	162	179
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders	27	51	59
Other Orders	2	-	3

# Young Persons<sup>1</sup> Referred to the Probation Service

**New Referrals from Court** 

	2020	2021	2022
Total Referrals Young Persons	519	621	702
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	508	583	665
Orders without prior report	*	15	23
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	*	*	*
Referral for Community Service Reports	*	*	*
Family Conference	*	*	*

 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 from Court (Young Persons) 2022 % of total

Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports		95%
Orders without prior report	3%	
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	<=1%	
Referral for Community Service Reports	<=1%	
Family Conference	<=1%	

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of Reporting, 'Young Persons', refers to all persons less than 18 years of age referred to the Probation Service and those aged 18 and over who were allocated to Young Persons Probation to ensure an age/ need appropriate response.

#### **Supervision**

	2020	2021	2022
Total Supervision Orders Young Persons	490	566	645
Probation Orders	198	260	292
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	233	243	271
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	17	27	39
Community Service Orders	13	8	27
Detention & Supervision Orders	21	9	9
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders Made	*	12	*
Family Conference	-	7	*
Other Orders**	*	-	*
Deferment of Detention Orders	-	-	-

 From 2020, Data for some categories are not displayed in accordance with Statistical Disclosure control to ensure that individuals are protected against disclosure \*\* Other Orders includes various disposals under the Children Act, 2001.

#### Supervision (Young Persons) 2022 % of total



#### Assessment Reports Requested (Young Persons) 2018 - 2022



#### Orders Made by Year (Young Persons) 2018 to 2022



# Young Adults (18 to 21 year olds) Referred to the Probation Service

#### **New Referrals from Court**

	2020	2021	2022
Total Referrals Young Adults	952	1,141	1,099
Referral for Probation (Pre-Sanction) Reports	740	841	854
Orders without prior report	70	120	99
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	80	94	91
Referral for Community Service Reports	62	86	55
Family Conference	-	-	-

#### New Referrals From Court (Young Adults) 2022 % of total



## Supervision

	2020	2021	2022
Total Supervision Orders Young Adults	794	939	987
Orders for Supervision During Deferment of Penalty	343	336	409
Probation Orders	221	250	242
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	98	164	151
Community Service Orders	97	162	146
Part Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders Made	33	27	37
Other Orders	2	-	2

#### Supervision (Young Adults) 2022 % of total





#### Assessment Reports Requested (Young Adults) 2018 - 2022

#### Orders Made by Year (Young Adults) 2018 to 2022



# Flow of Persons on Supervision during 2022

**Order Type** 

	Active Jan 1 2021	Orders Commenced	Orders Closed	Active Jan 1 2022
Total	7,292	6,974	6,697	7,569
Fully Suspended Sentence with Supervision	1,607	1,311	1,009	1,909
Community Service Order	2,021	1,207	1,492	1,736
Probation Order	1,468	1,315	1,339	1,444
Part Suspended Sentence with Supervision	1,230	576	381	1,425
Deferment of Penalty	602	2,345	2,263	684
Post Release Supervision	123	32	21	134
Life Sentence Prisoner Supervision	120	2	4	118
Community Return	66	176	169	73
Other	49	9	14	44
Family Conference	6	1	5	2

# Offence Breakdown of all Referrals and Orders made 2022

**Offence Category** 

	Referrals During 2022	Probation Type Supervision	Community Service Orders
Total	100%	100%	100%
Drug Offences	20.2%	22.6%	18.8%
Assault Offences	18.0%	17.4%	11.8%
Theft	15.7%	18.3%	11.5%
Public Order Offences	10.0%	10.3%	11.7%
Road Traffic Offences	6.4%	4.1%	18.7%
Burglary	5.9%	6.3%	3.3%
Property Offences	3.6%	3.9%	3.1%
Sexual Offences	3.6%	2.9%	0.0%
Dangerous Acts	3.6%	3.4%	5.3%
Fraud Offences	2.8%	2.2%	3.8%
Robbery	2.6%	2.1%	0.4%
Weapons & Explosives	2.6%	2.5%	1.7%
Offences against Justice	2.4%	3.4%	0.6%
Miscellaneous Offences	2.2%	0.5%	9.3%
Homicide Offences	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Kidnapping	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%

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## **Referrals by Court Venue – 2022**

#### **Court Venue**

	Jurisdict	ion		
	Circuit Court and Higher Courts	Circuit Court Appeals from District Court	District Court	Total
Overall Total	2,355	314	5,947	8,616
Total Dublin (City and County)	739	102	1,914	2,755
Dublin (CCJ)	688	101	877	1,666
Smithfield	1		358	359
Dun Laoghaire			305	305
Tallaght			118	118
Swords			73	73
Clover Hill			65	65
Blanchardstown		1	56	57
Balbriggan	50		1	51
Non-specified Dublin			32	32
Drug Treatment Court	•	•	24	24
Four Courts			5	5
Cork	180	5	592	777
Limerick	106	6	385	497
Waterford City	133	29	146	308
Ennis	32	5	197	234
Kilkenny	46	15	169	230
Naas	127	13	65	205
Galway City	95	10	90	195
Portlaoise	53	8	120	181
Castlebar	61	3	113	177
Carlow	41	6	127	174
Trim	80	5	52	137
Dundalk	53	12	70	135
Tullamore	42	7	86	135
Longford	59	3	70	132
Nenagh	45		82	127
Letterkenny	39	6	80	125
Wexford	80	2	40	122

Jurisdiction				
	Circuit Court and Higher Courts	Circuit Court Appeals from District Court	District Court	Total
Wicklow	57	38	17	112
Midleton		1	111	112
Mullingar	53	4	53	110
Bray	2		106	108
Clico	30	1	4.4	95
Sligo		1	64	
Clonmel	47	4	42	93
Mallow	•	1	89	90
Drogheda	2	•	74	76
Cavan	35	3	34	72
Fermoy	•	2	70	72
Bandon	•	3	62	65
Thurles			58	58
Monaghan	28	3	24	55
Carrick-On-Shannon	12		42	54
Athlone	•		54	54
Roscommon	30	1	18	49
Ballina		1	46	47
Gorey			44	44
Newcastle West			39	39
Ballinasloe			35	35
Tipperary	1		33	34
Macroom		3	26	29
Tuam			28	28
Clonakilty		1	26	27
Kilrush			27	27
Loughrea		1	25	26
Tralee	20	1	3	24
Bantry		1	23	24
Killaloe			23	23
Donegal	8		14	22
Ballyshannon			20	20
Youghal		3	16	19
Tubercurry			18	18
Arklow			17	17

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Jurisdiction				
	Circuit Court and Higher Courts	Circuit Court Appeals from District Court	District Court	Total
Skibbereen			15	15
Buncrana			15	15
Dungarvan		3	10	13
Gort			13	13

All other courts have made 10 or less referrals in 2022.

The total figures include all referrals, some not shown in table.





#### Probation Orders by County in 2022 per 100,000 Residents









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# 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 reports:

#### 1. 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.

#### 2. 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 scheme 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 people convicted of sexual offences 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.

#### Irish Probation Framework (IPF)

The Irish Probation Framework (IPF), formerly known as the Irish Offender Supervision Framework (IOSF), 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 2022.

#### **Capacity to Handle Risk**

There is a non-statutory Senior Management Team (Executive Management Team) in place, which comprises the Director, Deputy Directors and Principal Officer. Any major strategic matters, which arise for the Probation Service, are considered by this Team, which meets bi-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 2022, which was finalised in March 2023.

#### **Internal Control Issues**

The report on the Review of Internal Controls 2022 indicated that there are effective controls in place.

#### **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.

Mal Lol

Mark Wilson Director

## Appendix 3 Organisational Chart



The teams listed above vary in size and are resourced to meet the operational requirements of the Service. Teams may include a combination of Assistant Principal Probation Officers / Assistant Principals (or equivalent), Senior Probation Officers, Probation Officers, Administrative Officers, Higher Executive Officers, Community Service Supervisors, Executive Officers and Clerical Officers.

# Appendix 4 Regional Map



## Appendix 5 Main Probation Service Delivery Locations 2022



## Appendix 6 Community Based Organisations

In receipt of funding support through the Probation Service

- Adventure Sports Project (YPP), 21 Summerhill Place, Buckingham Street, Dublin 1. D01 XO86.
- 2) Aftercare Recovery Group, 48 Seville Place, North Wall, Dublin 1, D01 AD72.
- 3) Aiséirí Cahir, Townspark, Cahir, Co Tipperary, E21 E206.
- Aiséirí Céim Eile Céim Eile, 1 Glencarra, Ballybeg, Waterford, Co Waterford, X91 FH61V.
- 5) Aiséirí Wexford, Roxborough, Wexford, Co Wexford, Y35 AH70.
- 6) Aislinn (YPP), Ballyragget, Co Kilkenny, R95 R859.
- 7) Ana Liffey Project, 48 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1, D01 TY74.
- Athy Alternative Project, Community Service Centre, Unit 1&2 Nelson Street, Athy, Co Kildare, R14 PD88.
- Ballinasloe Training Workshop, Canal House, Harbour Road, Ballinasloe, Co Galway, H53 E275.
- 10) Ballymun Youth Action Project, Horizons Centre, Balcurris Road, Ballymun, Dublin 11, D11 X2EP.
- Ballyrunners, Ballymun Job Centre Co-op, Civic Centre, Main Street, Ballymun, Dublin 9, D09 C8P5.
- 12) Bridge Project, Unit 3, 131-133 Francis Street, Dublin 8, D08 EW44.
- 13) Bushypark (Clarecare), Bushypark Treatment Centre, Bushypark, Ennis, Co Clare, V95 A895.
- 14) Candle Community Trust (YPP), Candle Centre, Lynch's Lane, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, D10 F519.
- 15) Care After Prison, 56 Aungier Street, Dublin 2, D02 R598.

- 16) Céim ar Chéim (YPP), Moyross Youth Academy, The Bays, Knockalisheen Road, Moyross, Co Limerick, V94 XR4A.
- 17) Churchfield Community Trust, 107-109 Knockfree Avenue, Churchfield, Cork, Co Cork, T23 YR66.
- Coolmine Therapeutic Community, Ashleigh House, Damastown Walk, Damastown, Dublin 15, D15 HK12.
- 19) Cork Alliance Centre, Robert Scott House, 6 Patrick's Quay, Cork, Co Cork, T23 Y2EA.
- 20) Cornmarket Project Wexford Local Development, Old County Hall, Spawell Road, Wexford, Co Wexford, Y35 E2FK.
- 21) Cox's Demesne (YPP), The House, 15-16 Oakland Park, Dundalk, Co Louth, A91 AN25.
- 22) Crinan, 72 Sean McDermott Street, Dublin 1, D01 K201.
- 23) Cuan Mhuire Athy, Milltown, Athy, Co Kildare, R14 XH79.
- 24) Cuan Mhuire Bruree, Bruree, Limerick, Co Limerick, V35 CP57.
- 25) Cuan Mhuire Coolarne, Coolarne, Turloughmore, Athenry, Co Galway, H65 YW98.
- 26) Cuan Mhuire Farnanes, Merri Heits, Farnanes, Co Cork, P14 X590.
- Daughters of Charity Community Services (YPP), 8 Henrietta Street, Dublin 1, D01 W825.
- Deonach, Courthouse Square, Westpark, Tallaght Village, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 XR274.
- 29) Dóchas don Óige (YPP), Liosban Industrial Estate, Tuam Road, Galway, Co Galway H91 V20H
- 30) Donegal Women's Centre, Port Rd, Gortlee, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

- Fusion CPL, Cherry Orchard Health Centre, Cherry Orchard Grove, Dublin 10, D10 AA25
- 32) GROW, Apt 5 Forrest Mews, Swords, Co. Dublin
- Guild of St. Philip Neri, SVP House, 91/92 Sean McDermot Street Lower, Dublin 1, D01 WV38
- 34) Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service, St John's Parish Centre, Castle Street, Tralee, County Kerry, V92 K88V
- 35) Kilkenny Employment for Youth, Garden Row, Kilkenny, R95 WT28
- 36) Le Chéile Mentoring, 24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, A96 K522
- 37) Linkage /IASIO (Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities), Block 3, Grove Court, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 HNT2
- 38) Matt Talbot Adolescent Services CLG Youth Enterprise Scheme, Unit 4 Tramore Commercial Park, Tramore Road Cork.
- Matt Talbot Community Trust, 77 Colepark Drive, Ballyfermot, D10 EH34
- 40) Merchant Quay, 24 Merchants Court, Merchants Quay, Dublin 8
- 41) PACE CLG, Block 3, Grove Court, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15
- 42) PALLS, Unit 2 Docklands Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick City, Limerick, V94 DR12
- 43) Pro-Social Driver Programme CLG, Unit 3B, Donegal Enterprise Centre, Ballyraine, Letterkenny, County Donegal, F92 HC2V
- Restorative Justice in the Community, Annbrook Business Centre, Cleary's Garage, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, E45 W681
- 45) Restorative Justice Services, Marshelsea Court, 22/23 Merchant's Quay, Dublin 8, D08 C6XP
- SAOL Project, SAOL Project Ltd, 58 Amiens Street, Dublin, D01 K253

- 47) Solas Project, Unit 1, Liberty View, Longs Place, Dublin 8, D08 WY84
- 48) Southill Outreach, 5, Michael Street, Limerick, V94 36H3
- 49) Stepping out Programme, National Learning Network, Belhavel, Golden Island, Athlone, Co Westmeath, N37 A5R2
- 50) St. Stephen's Green Trust, Guinness Enterprise Centre, Taylor's Lane, Dublin 8, D08 HH4N
- 51) Tabor Group, Spur Hill, Doughcloyne, Cork, T12 YE14
- 52) Tallaght Probation Project (DEONACH), Courthouse Square, Tallaght Village, Tallaght, D24 XR274
- 53) Tivoli Training Centre, 24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 K522
- 54) Tower Programme, Cusack house, Neilstown Road, Clondalkin, D22 H9Y9
- 55) TRAIL PMVT Housing Service, PMVT Housing Support Service, Trail, 29 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1.
- 56) Traveller Justice Initiative, St Stephen's Green Trust, Guinness Enterprise Centre, Taylor's Lane, Dublin 8, D08 HH4N.
- 57) Treo Port Lairge CLG, Unit 2, Block 4, Lacken Rd. Business Park, Waterford, X91 PW29
- 58) Tuam Community Training Centre, Vicarshorland, Tuam, Co. Galway, H54 KX78
- 59) Tus Nua, Abigail Centre, Kildonan Road, Finglas, Dublin 11, D11 EHK2
- 60) Westview Young Persons Probation Project (The Foróige, Westview Project, Foróige, Watercourse Road, Blackpool, Cork City, T23 YD58
- 61) Wexford Centre Project Limited, Unit 7, Liberty Corner, Dublin 1, County Dublin, D01 K5C9
- 62) WHAD Project, Cherry Orchard Community Centre, Cherry Orchard Grove, Dublin 10 D10 H024