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## Launch of the Ministry of Justice

**The new Ministry of Justice was launched on 9 May. According to the Secretary of State it will focus fully on improving the justice system for the public.**

The original announcement by the Prime Minister was made on 29 March 2007 and surprised many commentators. Napo is not aware that any consultation has occurred between the two critical dates, about the structure of the new ministry, particularly MAPPA arrangements. However, Lord Falconer, the Lord Chancellor and first Secretary of State for Justice, said the new department, responsible for courts, prisons, probation and constitutional affairs, existed for one purpose only and that was to improve the justice system.

The key themes of the Ministry would be: protecting the public; reducing re-offending and sense in sentencing.

He added: 'The justice system is

performing significantly better than in the past, but there is still considerable room for improvement. By bringing together courts, prisons and probation services we will have a coherent system looking at the whole life of an offender from conviction to punishment to rehabilitation.'

He said improvements would be measured in a number of ways:

- Fewer offenders re-offending,
- Public confidence about the punishment fitting the crime.
- Connections with the communities it serves, and
- Victims feeling the system looks after them.

In a press statement Napo said: 'The justice unions have been campaigning for a Justice Ministry for many years. The Home Office is too large, overly bureaucratic, and dysfunctional. However, there is little

evidence that attention has been given to the detailed working of the new Ministry. Police and Probation are now in separate departments, yet working together on public protection has been an absolute priority. It is of concern that no one seems to know how these arrangements will continue in the future. The justice system now needs a period of stability, not constant change. The new Justice Minister must consult widely with stakeholders about future developments.'

Napo added:

'As a matter of priority, the Minister must resolve the prison overcrowding crisis by either releasing non violent prisoners on temporary licence or ensuring that the courts send less people to prison in the first place.'

**Harry Fletcher**



## Probation Centenary Conference

**The Probation Centenary Conference, organised by the PBA and Napo, on 1-2 May was a resounding success. Around 400 people attended the conference, at the Brewery Conference Centre, London.**

Attendees were principally from probation services throughout England and Wales, but there were also representatives from the voluntary sector, the police and prison services, and from agencies overseas. Fuller coverage, including extracts from speeches by Lord Falconer and Lord Phillips, inside.

Further reports on the two day conference (including video clips) on <http://www.probationcentenaryconference.co.uk/>

## Detailed scrutiny as Bill enters Lords' Committee Stage

The Offender Management Bill has now entered Committee Stage in the House of Lords. It will now be subject to detailed scrutiny. The dates for Committee are 16, 21 and 23 May and 5 and 12 June. The House will sit from 3.30pm until closure on each day.

Napo has produced a number of briefing papers for Peers in support of amendments which have been tabled on our behalf.

### Probation purposes

The first debate on 16 May, which lasted for several hours, was about the purpose of probation. Peers from all Parties argued that the purpose of probation had become confused, even lost, and that there was a need to re-establish the probation values of rehabilitation and reintegrating individuals into the community. The concept of punishment, argued Lord Ramsbotham, was alien to the service. This is likely to be debated again when the Bill reaches its Third Reading.

Other amendments, drafted and supported by Napo, include:

- A duty to co-operate, which supports introducing the Scottish system in England and Wales – sponsored by Baroness Linklater for the Liberal Democrats
- A duty to consult the judiciary, local authorities, the voluntary sector and probation trusts when deciding issues of resources – sponsored by Baroness Anelay, for the Conservatives, and Lord Ramsbotham (cross bencher).
- A clause giving exclusive powers to Boards and Trusts to commission and taking that power away from the Secretary of State and the Regions – sponsored by Baroness Anelay.
- The exclusion of supervision from the provisions of the Bill – sponsored by Baroness Linklater.

- An amendment to ensure that all providers of probation services implement the Race Equality Duty under section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act – sponsored by Baroness Anelay.
- A condition that all providers of probation services, not just Boards and Trusts, shall have a duty to reduce re-offending.
- The introduction of the concept of best value into contract letting. (This was a concession announced by the Secretary of State but thus far it has not been acted on) – sponsored by Baroness Gibson and Baroness Turner, for Labour.
- A condition that all providers of probation must train probation staff – sponsored by Lord Judd, for Labour, Baroness Howe and Lord Ramsbotham, for the cross-benchers, Baroness Anelay, and Baroness Linklater.
- An amendment that all providers of probation services must adhere to

minimum standards in the provision of reports and other probation matters – sponsored by the Conservatives and cross-benchers.

- A clause to rename 'approved premises' as 'bail hostels' – sponsored by the Conservatives.
- The removal of the Statutory Instrument which would have given the Secretary of State the power to contract out court work – sponsored by the Conservatives.
- An amendment to keep national collective bargaining with the Secretary of State rather than transferring the determination of terms and conditions to Boards and Trusts – sponsored by Baroness Gibson for Labour.

If the clause on local commissioning is passed, the Probation Service will be protected from the ravishes of privatisation.

Harry Fletcher

## Justice Forum Low Pay Conference 22 June

The Justice Forum is organising a one-day event on 22 June at the TUC, Congress House, in London to highlight the problem of low pay within the Justice System.

Low pay is an endemic problem in many areas in our justice system. The increasing use of privatisation means that the problem is increasing rather than reducing. Whilst the public perception is of highly paid QCs and judges enjoying a privileged existence, the reality is of courts' administrators existing on rates barely above the minimum wage and prison staff competing for their own jobs with pay rates being driven down by widespread privatisation.

Speakers include:

Frances O'Grady (TUC); Sanjiv Sachdev

(Kingston University); Mark Serwotka (PCS); Brian Caton (POA); Heather Wakefield (Unison); Megan Dobney (SERTUC); John Randall (Skills for Justice); Harry Fletcher (Napo).

This conference will seek to highlight the extensive use of low paid workers propping up our justice system. It will look at gender and race, and the implications of low skills and privatisation.

Napo has booked a number of places which will be allocated on a first come basis. If any member is interested in attending, please contact your local branch who may be able to sponsor you.

For more information [kfalcon@napo.org.uk](mailto:kfalcon@napo.org.uk).



# Peers debate Probation Purposes

The first Committee session on the Offender Management Bill in the House of Lords occurred on 16 May. A large part of the debate was taken up with discussion on the purposes of probation, led by Baroness Anelay for the Conservatives and Lord Ramsbotham for the cross-benchers. An amendment from Lord Ramsbotham, to delete punishment from the purposes of probation was not pressed to a vote. But in all probability it will be debated again at Report Stage.

Napo believes this debate is a vital milestone in the union's campaign to promote the probation values of rehabilitation and reintegration into the community. Napo argued in briefing papers that the service has gone too far down the road of punishment and enforcement, to the detriment of work with individuals on orders.

Amongst comments made.

## Baroness Anelay of St Johns

'The Probation Service has been the victim of continual reorganisation since 1997; now it faces yet another. It is essential that those who will provide services under the new system have guidance on the proper functions of probation. I do not doubt that the professional members of the Probation Service already follow the principles set out in my amendment in their management of offenders, and we should recall that they do so in the most difficult circumstances. Their clients are the most difficult in society to care for or to control. Statistics tell us that they are largely drug users, dishonest and disorganised. If the public are to have confidence in non-custodial sentences and the extension of their use in future – for example, in monitoring those on bail and in the supervision of offenders released into the community – it is vital that the protection of the public is a key principle that applies to all probation providers.'

## Lord Ramsbotham

'But the issue of whether 'punishment' is the right word has very deep roots in the whole ethos of the Probation Service ever since it started. I consulted many members of the Probation Service on the Bill, and the one thing that, as the Scots would say, 'stuck in their craw' is the inclusion of the word 'punishment' in the list of what they are supposed to do.'

'For 93 years, advising, assisting and befriending was the ethos of the Probation Service – a service of which everyone in this country was immensely proud. It was not until 2001 that those principles were thrown away and the new ones which are the subject of the noble Baroness's amendment were produced, including the words 'proper punishment'. For the first time, the word 'punishment' appeared.

Why do I object to the word "punishment"? The criminal justice system is not really a system at all. It consists of a number of organisations working together and three in particular: the courts, the police and the Prison and Probation Services. In general terms, the police investigate, the courts sentence and the Prison and Probation Services administer that sentence. The "punishment" in that is the punishment that is awarded by the courts because of the crime that has been committed.'

## Lord Low of Dalston

'Even prison strives to deliver a rehabilitative effect, although most of the time it seems to be an unequal struggle. It went without saying in my day that probation exemplified the aims of reform and rehabilitation more than any others and that it was the penal system's principal vehicle for pursuing these aims. From that point of view, probation was the custodian of all the most liberal elements in penal policy. It therefore came as quite a shock when I turned my attention to these matters again on my arrival in this House to discover how much things had changed in the intervening decades. It seems generally agreed that the historic values of probation have been progressively eroded over the past couple of decades, so I absolutely agree with the noble Baroness, Lady Anelay, and her colleagues that we must not miss the opportunity presented by the Bill, which threatens to wreak so much damage on the Probation Service, to reassert the traditional values of that service.'

## Lord Northbourne

'I have sat as a magistrate for more than 17 years and have been involved with local probation liaison committees and probation officers in that time. It is one of the most difficult tasks performed by the Probation Service. Probation officers are not there to enforce the law. If there is a breach of a decision made by the court, the Probation Service reports it to the court, and it is for the court to decide what action to take.'

## Baroness Stern

'Since the government plan to abolish the Probation Service first appeared, and the proposal to create instead a set of probation functions that could be put on the market, I have received messages about it from different parts of the world...' What on



Baroness Linklater at the Probation Centenary conference.

Earth is going on?' they wanted to know. "Why would the Government want to do this? You in England and Wales have something that we are struggling to build, without which there is an enormous gap in our criminal justice system". They have asked, Is this service, a model for the world, to be fragmented and reduced to a set of functions?'

## The Earl of Listowel

'I seek from the Minister the assurance that nothing in the Bill may unintentionally undermine the professional framework within which probation officers operate. For instance, it should not overburden the service with targets, procedures, regulations, inspection or data collection; rather, it should develop those working on the front line, increase the quality of their supervision and create greater opportunities for continuing professional development.'

## Baroness Linklater of Butterstone

'The essence of offender management, which is at the heart of all probation services, is the fundamental belief in the capacity of people, including offenders, to change. It is the key. How we protect the public and reduce incarceration and reoffending is predicated on the belief that people can be helped to move from being an offender to being a citizen. That is the core of the value of the Probation Service and must be understood by all those who presume to reconfigure it. The principles of probation emanate from that belief. Deeply unfashionable as it seems to have become, the phrase "to advise, assist and befriend", which has been referred to, encapsulates that humanity and the essential, personal quality of the nature of probation work, which we reject at our peril.'

'The second amendment, in the name of the noble Lord, Lord Ramsbotham, represents another of those fundamental principles that I have been talking about. The role of the Probation Service, or any other provider of probation services, is to carry out the instructions of the court; it is not to punish.'



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### More partnership and less dictat

From what we have seen so far of the Ministry of Justice, we can only say 'so far so good'.

Much of this is down to the personal style of the current Secretary of State, Lord Falconer.

In sharp contrast to John Reid, Charlie Falconer has:

- rushed round the country to see Probation in action, (if that doesn't sound too much like Badger Watch!),
- made a most positive and complimentary speech about the Service at the Probation International Centenary Conference in early May, and
- wanted to meet Napo in his first week in office.

When we met, we were impressed with the fact that we had a genuine dialogue on the issues that concern members about the future of the Service. He said that he supported the sentiments of Peter Hain, (quoted on my weblog), when he said that what the Probation Service needed was 'more partnership and less dictat'.

Lord Falconer gave us a full opportunity to explain our concerns about the Offender Management Bill and what it means for the Service.

We said that we welcomed the fact that he seemed to recognise the need to address low morale in the Service. We now wanted the new 'mood music' that he was responsible for, to be converted into action. We suggested that this could be done by the Government accepting some, if not all, of the amendments that Napo was supporting in the Lords' Committee stage of the OM Bill that started on 16 May.

We stressed:

- the importance of Probation and the Probation Service, as a profession and as a concept, not disappearing, as threatened by the contestability process;
- the dangers of contestability for the fragmentation of the Service both for its future as well as for its professional training base;

- the need for successful change management to be underpinned by a vision that staff could sign up to – something singularly absent in the case of NOMS;
- the need for the Service to be adequately resourced and the need for workload prioritisation, if there was more work than resources.

We pointed out:

- that nearly a year after we had been told that Cohort 10 of TPOs would be the last, we were still awaiting proposals on what training would be put in its place;
- that we were still awaiting proposals for a national training strategy for PSOs.

We pointed out that three and a half years after the Carter Report, 'they' – (and we're not sure who 'they' are any more) – are still making it up on the back of an envelope.

In this context 'it' includes:

- NOMS structures;
- the future of the Probation Service;
- whether or not there will always be a national voice, such as a national Director for Probation, as there is for the Prison Service, and if so, their role in the NOMS' hierarchy;
- what is meant by 'best value' and its relation to the 10% target for sub-contracting out;
- the criteria for determining how a Board becomes a Trust;
- the future of national collective bargaining;
- how probation training and workforce planning will be secured and undertaken in a fragmented market.

Lord Falconer was well briefed and showed an understanding of our concerns. It was particularly refreshing that he tried to

identify what united rather than divided us. An approach diametrically opposed to the pugnacious style, of John Reid.

Clearly Lord Falconer may not survive the new Gordon Brown Government, if only because he is in the Lords rather than in the Commons. The signs are, however, that he will make good and a positive impact, whatever his length of stay with us.

### Training

Napo met with the people working on training issues in mid May, to consider both PSO training, and plans for the new qualification to replace the DipPS after Cohort 10, the last intake of TPOs this October.

The plans for PSO training are set out in terms of modules and overall look good.

One of the main problems is that Areas don't have enough money to make training for PSOs meaningful. Areas are given a budget of £800 a head for each PSO; a figure that has not been increased for several years now. At best this will cover some of the training, it doesn't start to address workload relief while the training takes place.

But it's a start, and a Probation Circular should be out before the end of the month with more details.

Plans for the new qualification to replace the DipPS, due to be modular based, are still to be mapped out. The only papers shared with us to date are papers setting out a list of questions on the new qualification. We have expressed our concerns about the potential for another training gap, and we will be monitoring this very carefully in the coming weeks and months.

Judy McKnight

## Women in Napo Conference

**The personal is professional: Behind the Scenes of Women's working lives**

**Friday 13 July 2007**

**Holiday Inn, Kings Cross, London**

Speakers include:

**Mary Davies**, Professor in trade union studies at London Metropolitan University

**Francis Crook**, Director Howard League for Penal Reform

**Francis O'Grady**, Deputy General Secretary TUC

**Camila Batmanghelidjh**, Kids Company

**Supt Ellie Bird**, British Transport Police

**Heather Harvey**, Amnesty International

**Gloria Mills**, Unison

Come and join us and network with a diverse group of women working in probation, trade unions, education, the

police and national and international politics.

**Fringe Meeting: 'The future of Women in Napo'**

Take part in the debate: is there a future for women in Napo? What can you do to ensure its continuity? Women of all ages are welcome we particularly want to hear from younger women.

**Registration**

The cost of attending the conference is free with the exception of overnight accommodation on the 12 or 13 July. To register for this very important event contact your branch or Shireena Suleman at Chivalry Road ssuleman@napo.org.uk or 020 7223 4887 for a registration form. Places are limited so register early!

**Cordell Pillay**

## Bits & Pieces

### Breach and recall

Encouraged by the comments of the Lord Chief Justice in his speech to the Probation Centenary Conference, Napo has written again to Probation Minister, Gerry Sutcliffe, over the issue of enforcement action.

We are in agreement with the Lord Phillips that current breach and recall arrangements are unnecessarily inflexible and are significantly contributing to the growth in the prison population. We have suggested that action over technical breaches, where there is no assessed increase in risk, could be relaxed, perhaps even with the re-injection of professional discretion. In Napo's opinion this could both contribute to a reduction in the prison population and at the same time reduce the administrative burden on probation caused by unnecessary enforcement proceedings. It might even improve relations with those whom we supervise if case managers appeared more responsive to their unintentional rather than wilful failures to co-operate. Potential wins all round?

It is probably a complete co-incidence but there is still no sign of the revised National Standards that have been

anticipated for about a year now. The latest information suggested that they were due to be operational from June. Ever optimistic, Napo is hopeful that the delay in publication indicates some consideration being given to a review of enforcement procedures.

### National Workload Measurement Tool

Napo has continued to express its concerns to NOMS about the development and roll-out of the Tool. The Project Board has not met since last September although a meeting has now been scheduled for June. It has been difficult to elicit hard factual information regarding the NWMT in the absence of any formal oversight by the Board but Napo is hoping to be able to issue an up to date status report to all branches soon. What is evident is that the NWMT project has suffered from a lack of resources in recent months. This contrasts with a significant flurry of interest both within NOMS, and also in higher places, over Probation unit costings. Napo understands that a well-known firm of consultants has been engaged, at unknown expense, to progress this work. We understand that a circular is shortly to be issued to probation areas on the subject



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but as yet Napo has not been given any briefings on this work.

### Dyslexia

Are you sufficiently confident that those suffering from this and related conditions are properly identified? Once identified, are you satisfied that proper allowance and adjustments to practice are made as a consequence? Have you had any training in this, in particular knowing how to identify significant indicators? Both staff and those with whom we work can be disadvantaged by dyslexia. Employment can be jeopardised if it remains undetected and in probation, for example, it can lead to inappropriate enforcement action and even prison. Napo would be interested to learn of members experiences. Please contact [mmccllland@napo.org.uk](mailto:mmccllland@napo.org.uk).

### SFO Reviews

Following Napo's meeting with the Head of the Public Protection Unit, as reported in the last edition of Napo News, we have now received, from him, a draft Introductory Guide to SFO Reviews. Napo is in the process of responding to this draft. The intention is to develop an easily understandable paper that clarifies the process and provides some more reassurance to staff who become involved in any such reviews.

### Mike McClelland National Chair

## Health and Safety courses

**New Reps** – a general introduction including a practice risk assessment.

Friends House, London  
*Tuesday 19 June*

**Experienced Reps II** – topics to include fire risk assessment, asbestos and the concept of 'suitable' and 'sufficient' in risk assessment.

Yorkshire & Humberside Probation Training Consortium, Leeds  
*Wednesday 4 July*

**Registration forms from Margaret Pearce**  
**0207 223 4887 [mpearce@napo.org.uk](mailto:mpearce@napo.org.uk)**

## National Representation Panel

**Members who are experiencing difficulties at work and whose employment is at risk as a result of a disciplinary investigation are normally represented, at a formal hearing, by a member of Napo's National Representation Panel. Our reps are Napo members with extensive experience of representing members in formal proceedings over many years. During the past year (to May 2007), national reps have represented a total of 73 members at disciplinary and appeal hearings. They have had many successes, and saved a number of colleagues from dismissal, although the confidential nature of such proceedings makes sharing these outcomes publicly inappropriate.**

Added to this, of course, is the often unsung work undertaken at Branch/Section level by local reps who represent members in less 'serious' matters or in the investigatory stages of potential gross misconduct cases. Napo and its members are grateful for the valiant work undertaken by all our reps, local and national.

However, it is important to consider how this work can be developed and improved. Currently Napo provides courses on representing members at Eastbourne and/or Wortley Hall and a number of courses are run for Branches by a national rep. This year we will be providing a representation course for black members only and a course for manager members,

exploring their role and responsibilities, is currently being developed by one of our national reps. For some time we have also been considering the nomination and appointment process for the national Reps Panel. We want to formalise this process, broaden the diversity of those acting as reps, and develop a 'succession' programme for potential national reps which might involve shadowing and being mentored by existing reps. We are in consultation with colleagues in the staff support groups about these plans and will be addressing any employment implications with the national employers.

None of this is easy or simple to complete but it is important to try in recognition of the significance of this work to Napo and its members. Our current panel of national reps is supporting this work. They are also important sources of information about issues and trends arising in Areas through disciplinary cases. Some of these issues raise concerns about the role of some senior managers and employers in the process. Regrettably, they also occasionally raise questions about the attitude and behaviour of colleagues towards each other. In the future we hope to publish some of the thoughts and experiences of our national reps as a way of broadening understanding of this vital work.

**Jonathan Ledger**

# Centenary Conference – a resounding success

**Napo and the PBA began planning in 2005 for the centenary conference, which was held in the Brewery Conference Centre, in London, on 1 and 2 May. The PBA had used the Brewery before and enthusiastically recommended it as the venue. In the event it turned out to be an excellent choice. Around 400 people attended the conference, principally from probation services throughout England and Wales, but there were also representatives from the voluntary sector, the police and prison services, and from agencies overseas.**

The conference was opened by Lord Falconer, the new Minister of Justice, and some of his positive comments are produced in this article.

On the first day key note speeches were given by Maurice Vanstone, on Probation's history; by Peter Rainer, on probation punishment and control; and by Helen Edwards on social inclusion and the future of the service.

There were 10 breakout seminars all of which were well attended.

The second day was opened by Lord Phillips, the Lord Chief Justice, and again some of his comments are produced in this issues.

A closing session with Baroness Stern and Lord Hurd gave evidence of what support there is for the service in the House of Lords.



Lord Falconer.

**A second centenary conference, organised by the Hallam Centre for Community Justice at Sheffield Hallam University, takes place from Monday 10 to Thursday 13 September and details of this conference were posted out with the last issue of Napo News. For more information email [conference21@shu.ac.uk](mailto:conference21@shu.ac.uk) or telephone 0114 225 5342.**

## Lord Falconer

Opening the Probation Centenary Conference Lord Falconer said:

'The creation of the Ministry of Justice on 9 May represents I believe the opportunity of a generation. It is a unique chance to build a better justice system. A system underpinned throughout by a desire to improve public confidence. A system focused wholly on the public.

I am enormously pleased that it has happened. It is the right result, for the penal system, for the justice system, for this country. I am delighted and excited that probation is to become an integral part of the Ministry of Justice. It is where you belong, and it is where you will be able to flourish even further.

Probation is a vital part of the Justice System. It will of course be a vital and integral part of Ministry of Justice. I am keen to work with you so we can ensure it is a positive and productive relationship.

Underpinning our approach to probation is inevitably a desire to reduce re-offending. Using probation as effectively as we can. Increasing rehabilitation, reducing re-offending, more restorative justice, raising public protection. The challenge we face, and you most particularly on the front line, is that of how to turn the offender into the citizen.

Probation staff are an important face of the justice system. Your energy, professionalism and commitment are vital if we are to deliver a justice system that works for all. A justice system which is fit for the public we serve.

People very often knock the value of public service. But in the Probation Service I see individuals who want to improve communities and build a better society. Who recognise it is not a short term fix but a long term relationship. Individuals who recognise that serving the public is more than just turning up for work and then going home. Individuals who take pride in what they do and the difference they make. That is the sign of real public service and I profoundly appreciate it.

The probation service has a deserved legacy – and it is right we are celebrating it today. You should be proud. Over the last century you have helped hundreds of thousands to get their life in order, to turn away from

crime, to contribute to society. Criminals transformed into citizens. That is your legacy.

Through all the change over the coming months let me categorically assure you. Your work in my eyes will never be undervalued, nor will it be forgotten. I will support you in every way. I am keen to see the Probation Service grow. And I very much look forward to working with you as we deliver a better justice system for all.'

## Lord Phillips

Lord Chief Justice, Lord Phillips, addressed the conference on its second day. He said:

'I was speaking earlier this year at a National Offender Management Service conference for sentencers and I was able to explain that I have had personal experience



Lord Phillips, Baroness Stern and Ellie Roy.

of and enthusiasm for the probation service for well over half its life. When I was at school we lived in Maidenhead and a family friend who was a Magistrate arranged for me to spend a day with the local probation officer. Now they would call this work experience. What I experienced was the personal dedication of the probation officer to his task of helping offenders to get their lives together and manage them in a way that did not involve re-offending.

The experience was inspirational, and was the origin of my interest in the law. What struck me was the strength of the relationship between the probation officer and the offenders, and if I have a theme today it is that fundamental to successful offender management is the building of relationships. It is not primarily about meeting targets, or satisfying a business cases, or enforcing community punishments, or breaching those who do not comply with orders, or risk assessment. These may all be part of the job, but if building relationships is not at the heart of the exercise, the exercise will be likely to fail.'

'The offenders must be properly supervised and appropriate action taken if they do not turn up for work. Here I would like to interject some general comments about breaching. I have concerns about a



Over 400 people attended over two days.

system that requires automatic return to custody where conditions of a community sentence or licence are breached. Such a requirement detracts from the autonomy of the probation officer, who is best placed to distinguish between the offender who has no motivation to undertake his community sentence, and therefore must face time in prison, and the offender who has a disorganised lifestyle, but with whom it is worth persevering.

To assume all offenders in breach are in the first category can frustrate the efforts of those who – often painstakingly – work to build relationships with those under their supervision. It also fills up the prisons. With curtailed probation officer discretion, supervised licences have become a trapdoor to prison. The Inspectorate review of 42 determinate sentence prisoners in five local jails suggested that 48 percent had committed technical breaches of licence.

I can appreciate the argument that an approach of advising, assisting and befriending an offender may not be an appropriate response when he is in breach, but if a probation officer is succeeding



Geese Theatre Company.

in forming the vital relationship with an offender there is a strong argument for leaving him to decide, having regard to the circumstances of the individual case, what is the appropriate course to take in the event of breaches that reflect disorganisation rather than villainy.'

'Where does one find the people who care about offenders and who will form with them the relationships that are such a vital element in rehabilitation. One finds them in the many voluntary organisations who work with the probation service. And I have always believed that caring for offenders was what the probation service was all about. But it seems to me that there has been a considerable shift in what the probation service is called upon to do.

The job is much more about risk assessment, risk management and enforcement of sentences and licence conditions. Is the job less attractive today?'

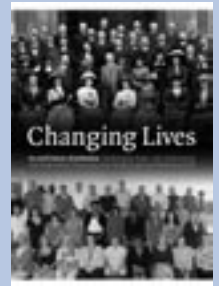
I am however anxious that in the search for improvement we do not lose the good that we have got; The new arrangements must accommodate and continue to attract the many, both in the service and in voluntary organisations working with the service, who are working with and relating to offenders, so that the relationships that have been the leitmotif of this talk, continue to be formed.'

'I govern a public school that has as its motto "et nova et vetera", "both the new and the old". I believe that there is merit in that motto in most situations. In seeking to introduce improvements by making changes in offender management let us not overlook the merits of a probation service that has served us so well over the last 100 years.'

## Changing Lives

### An oral history of probation

In 1908 a small number of probation officers met in a house in Croydon to plan the formation of the National Association of Probation Officers, later to become Napo. The previous year, in August 1907, the Probation Service came into being and it has now existed for 100 years. Ironically it reaches its centenary at a time when its future as a national service is uncertain. Whatever happens over the next period the title 'Probation' is in danger of being lost. This book celebrates the work and achievements of the Probation Service over its first century. It restates its values through the words of retired members, through the main events in its and Napo's history, through images in film and television and through the comments of many individuals who have appreciated the contribution of the service over the last 50 years. Profits to The Edridge Fund



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**For any enquiries contact [kfalcon@napo.org.uk](mailto:kfalcon@napo.org.uk). Telephone 020 7223 4887.**

## Pay Claim

The formal annual pay claim is now with the Employers for consideration and we have stressed the importance of a quick response. You will get news as soon as we have it.



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## Strategic pay

Perhaps more of a concern is the Strategic Pay Review. After feeling that we were making some progress, we are now finding ourselves coming up against a potentially significant problem. It has emerged that the employers appear to want to base the review on their proposed new management structure, including changing Service Manager roles into 'Performance and Practice Managers'. This is considerably more than a change in terminology, it has a potential impact across the whole grading structure, and is a very long way from being agreed with the unions. It's also the case that despite having meetings in our diaries to discuss these new roles, management still have not produced their preferred version of job descriptions as a basis for negotiation and we still have been given no date as to when we might receive them. We are very keen to have a full discussion amongst membership once we receive the proposed job descriptions, which we plan to circulate widely. So please involve yourselves in this debate.

All our work with CAFCASS on the SPR so far has been on the basis of the current grading system and needs to be completed on that basis. We have warned them that they could be about to derail the entire Strategic Pay Review if they are not willing to continue as we had agreed. Urgent discussions are going on about this now and we really hope this can be resolved. We may all have limited expectations of what significant improvements may come out of the SPR, but one thing we are sure about is that members won't be happy if this disappears into the long grass again.

## Workloads

Last month I explained that we were about to embark on trialling a method called 'process mapping' in order to develop better scorings for our various tasks. We have now had to agree with management that, given yet more potential changes to the way we work, particularly the Public Law Outline due to be announced at the President's Conference on 21 May, that we need to postpone this. There is a real problem with knowing what it is we are measuring at present and we need to have some sense of stability for a period before we can pick this up again. And yes you have seen the words stability and CAFCASS on the same page.

Nevertheless, irrespective of whether our workload measurement tools need updating, the issue of excessive workloads has not gone away. Members must seek help if their individual workloads are becoming damaging to their health. Obviously, the first step is a discussion with the line manager, but if you are concerned that this is not achieving what you need then talk to your convenor and we will take it up. And in a period when posts are not being filled and there is considerable uncertainty, please do not get drawn in to covering for structural failures and agree to do other people's jobs or parts of other people's jobs. There is a world of difference between pulling together to cover short term emergencies such as a colleague off sick, and taking on tasks long term to cover for gaps. Not only will your health suffer, but it effectively masks the real problems.

Which takes me on rather neatly to temporary appointments. We will continue to issue specific guidance on the many and varied interim posts that are popping up around the country. Sadly these are often being put into place without proper agreement with the unions and despite our serious reservations about issues such as equal pay and accountability. So please don't assume they have our blessing, unless we actively tell you they do.

## Staff engagement

CAFCASS is about to embark on a piece of work about 'staff engagement' and we wait with interest to see what this will mean in practice. No doubt the staff survey will be the starting point. Despite all the well documented problems over timing and methodology, it is full of powerful messages: about loss of trust; the differential experiences of Black and Ethnic Minority Staff; workloads – particularly of Service Managers, and poor communication. No doubt you will have identified others. What we now need to know is that these messages have been heard and, more importantly, accepted as the reality of staff's experience of working for this organisation. It is also crucial that the rather pernicious culture that has developed, of negativity towards groups of staff, a culture which appears to emanate from surprisingly high levels in the organisation, is genuinely addressed. If the reaction to the survey is 'well they would say that, wouldn't they' CAFCASS will have significantly failed in a basic management task. Staff engagement cannot be something that is done to us by our 'betters', it has to be a genuine analysis of what needs to change at all levels.

Staff engagement is not a KPI or a compliance issue.

The unions have asked for active discussion to take place about this issue. The first test is clearly whether that is acted upon.

## Ongoing work

There are a number of good pieces of work currently taking shape, just to prove that management and unions can achieve positive things together! CAFCASS asked us to contribute to developing procedures and guidance for support staff involved with Serious Case Reviews and this is almost complete. We will want to see how it works in practice so feedback from anyone who is involved would be much appreciated.

Napo has on a number of occasions found itself differing with the approach taken by CAFCASS in relation to Children's Rights. We were therefore very pleased recently to have a constructive meeting with Christine Smart, Children's Rights Director, in order to try to find more positive ways of working together. We all felt this had been a useful meeting and have made commitments to try to find more common cause in future.



In this vein, we are very pleased to see that the 'Needs Wishes and Feelings' packs are not a compulsory tool, as had originally appeared, and that changes suggested by various practitioners amongst others have been included. We are also hoping to finalise very soon a joint piece of work on using Children and Young People in Recruitment. This effectively deals with the concerns we had raised in the early days about this process and is a creative piece of work, based on good practice about which we feel very positive.

**Sian Griffiths**  
National Vice Chair

## Help us remember our past

Chiltern Counties, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire are attempting to collect some history of the branch, which at one time also included Northamptonshire. If you have been a member of the branch and have recollections, memoirs etc please contact [Gordon.Jackson@Bedfordshire.probation.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Gordon.Jackson@Bedfordshire.probation.gsi.gov.uk) or on 01582 413172.

# In praise of Monitoring

**It would be interesting to recall the number of people who have availed themselves of Napo's Monitoring process since this mechanism was first enshrined in Napo's constitution in 1987. However, if, like this writer, your previous union experience includes such negative reactions as having your point of view shouted down, ridiculed, humiliated or worse, then you may well appreciate why I find the monitoring of our unions' business such a reassuring and worthwhile experience.**

Furthermore, considering the amount of time that has elapsed since 1987 it seems quite remarkable that this process still remains almost unique to Napo.

So, what is monitoring and what isn't it? We should first dispel what it is not. It is not 'the thought police' as some critics have described it. Neither should it be considered as preventing lively and controversial debate. People just need to consider the impact of their language and behaviour upon others. Hence the monitoring process comes into its own.

It is a mechanism to ensure that, as an organisation, Napo should challenge discrimination, oppression and exclusion when it occurs within our union. It aims to create an environment where all members feel able to participate to the extent they

so wish. Monitoring aims to create a learning environment which is not afraid to challenge, but does so in a manner which is not destructive and to ensure that all Napo's policies, their implementation and impact, fully take into account equal rights and reflect the diversity of membership.

The monitoring of Napo's business can vary according to the size and type of meeting. Monitoring the business of AGM is likely to occur in a very different manner to that of a small group of people, or a branch meeting. Nevertheless, the key focus of monitoring union business should be the same whatever the size, the level of formality or nature of the event. We need to acknowledge that monitoring is a process of enabling mediation, negotiation and possibly constructive challenge rather than confrontation. It is an evolving process; depersonalising issues and making them the responsibility of the union as a whole.

Members may have found their way into monitoring through various ways. However, the most satisfying comprehensive way to effective monitoring is to attend the Monitors Training Day in September. This day is usually the first stage in organising the monitoring of the year's AGM.

There is always the need for new members and a freshness of approach. It's worth

remembering that no system is perfect or sacrosanct and our monitoring notes were last updated prior to 2003.

**Ken Boyall**  
Equal Rights Committee  
kennethboyall@yahoo.com.uk

## Support Napo's Learning & Development Strategy: Become a ULR

**Two training courses are available for Branch/Section nominees who wish to take on the role of Union Learning Representative (ULR): 2-4 July 2007 and 6-8 November 2007.**

Both at the Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, Leicestershire

These courses will provide an introduction to Napo's work on improving learning and development opportunities, and will explore ways in which ULRs can support the individual and collective learning needs of members.

Application forms are with Branches/Sections who have been asked to nominate two members for ULR training.

Contact Jeannie Ah-Fong at Napo head office for details – jahfong@napo.org.uk or 020 7223 4887.

### The Napo ULR Forum

Napo's ULR forum has over 20 trained ULRs from across the UK. Its role is to develop measures to support their work and help advise Napo on policy that supports members learning needs.

The next ULR forum is: 4 July at the Hinckley Island Hotel. ULRs are invited to attend from the evening of the 3 July to network with the new intake of ULRs. Dinner and accommodation provided and travel expenses available – contact Jeannie Ah Fong to confirm your attendance.

### Napo Learner of the Year

Napo is keen to highlight and promote positive examples of the member's engagement with any form of learning or personal development.

Napo is calling on ULRs to nominate a member from their branch who they feel is a great example of an individual interested in engaging with learning and helping to promote the value of learning to others. The winner will be selected by the ULR forum and invited to receive an award at Napo's AGM in October.

Contact me with details of your nomination, outlining why you feel they are a positive example for other Napo members – cpillay@napo.org.uk.

**Cordell Pillay**

## Appeal for solidarity with Zimbabwean trade unionists

**We have all seen the appalling news from Zimbabwe – hyper inflation above 3000%; unemployment at 80%; the lowest life expectancy (37) in the world, not least because of poverty, hunger and HIV/AIDS; and brutal repression of the free press, the political opposition and in particular our colleagues in the free trade union movement.**

Sometimes it is difficult to look over the horizon when we ourselves are deluged by perpetual change and threats to our own jobs, pay and conditions and indeed the very public services for which we work. Yet many of our fellow trade unionists around the globe suffer far greater tribulations and would value our support.

Nurses in Zimbabwe earn no more than one-third of that required even to keep a family above the poverty line. Hundreds of schools in southern Zimbabwe recently failed to re-open for the new term because teachers could no longer afford to commute to work – their take-home salaries would only enable them to buy one gallon of petrol and nothing else.

Members are urged to send messages of solidarity to the Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) at info@zctu.co.zw. Perhaps individual branches might consider

adopting an international solidarity cause such as this that they could then follow more closely. Pledges of support for the right of Zimbabwean unions to protest without fear of violence should also be sent direct to the Zimbabwean Government. This can be done via the Labour Start website [www.labourstart.org](http://www.labourstart.org).

**Mike McClelland**  
National Chair



© PA Photos/Joel Ryan

Demonstrators outside the Zimbabwean Embassy.

# Prison population crisis

**Napo understands that Lord Falconer has consulted widely on the prison crisis during the past month. He took over responsibility for prisons and probation in the new Ministry of Justice on 9 May.**

Napo also understands that, last month, he hosted a dinner with, amongst others, Lord Phillips, the Lord Chief Justice, Judge Igor Judge, representatives from the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Prison Service. Issues of sentencing and the prison population were discussed in depth. Lord Falconer is thought to have concluded that early release was his only option. He is, however, still considering how to present the decision to release prisoners politically.

During the last few weeks the prison population has risen to an all time record of nearly 81,000. Jails, police cells and available spaces at courts will soon be full.

The new Minister may announce during the next few weeks that more prisoners may be released on temporary licence, or that the Home Detention Curfew scheme will be extended, or that there will be a change of policy on recall. Either way preparing the prisoners for release by the Prison Department will take several weeks. Any announcement is likely to state that the prisoners will be released to close probation supervision and that many are released on daily temporary licence in any event. Any announcement, therefore, will be seen as an extension of existing rehabilitative schemes.

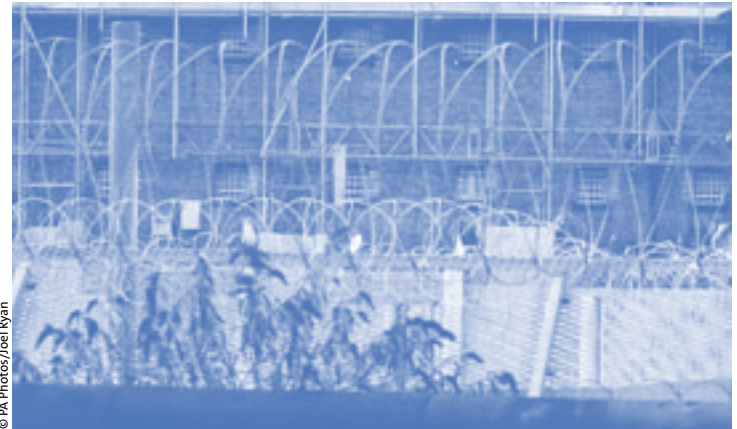
It is likely that anyone who still poses a threat or was convicted of serious offences such as violence or sexual assault would not be released. Despite the fact that no new resources were made available to the Probation Service, it will probably be stated that any persons released will be closely monitored by the probation staff.

Napo has been told that the most likely option is that the prisoners would be released on temporary licence a couple of weeks before the end of their sentence. Normally around 1700 prisoner are released each week.

In a press statement Napo, said: 'Over the last few years the Government has failed to deal with the looming prison crisis. Successive predictions produced by statisticians in the Home Office have indicated that the prison population would surge past 80,000 by 2007/8. Despite

the warnings the Government has not commissioned further prison places, changed the law so that less people go to prison, or provided adequate resources for Probation to fund custody plus. Custody plus, which was contained in the 2003 Criminal Justice Act, would have replaced sentences of less than a year, with short periods in custody and much longer periods on supervision. However, no resources were made available. The Government, therefore, has no choice but to release the prisoners early. Not to do so will result in system collapse.'

**Harry Fletcher**



© PA Photos/Joel Ryan  
Wandsworth Prison undergoing maintenance.

## Violent incidents

**Over the last couple of years, there has been increased reporting (in the press, if perhaps not at local Probation Area level) of higher levels of shooting incidents and knife attacks.**

At the last Health and Safety Committee, there was discussion as to whether any increase was reflected in terms of a new weapons and gang culture, as experienced by Napo members in the workplace

The Committee wondered whether we tend merely to dismiss as media hype, the sort of concerns, which seem to rise ever higher in the public awareness. Are we desensitised, and therefore blasé, about an increase in such violence?

We know that increasingly courts are setting up metal detectors at their entrances. Also that there has been at least one shooting focussing on service users at an Unpaid Work project. Some Areas, acknowledging that some service users are rival gang-members, are setting up separate reporting offices, regardless of the geographical location of those gang-members' residence, to try to anticipate and avoid potential clashes and violence. One Area at least has a seconded PO with police on the specialist aspect of working with gang members.

It may now be time to start drawing together what are still disparate lines of thinking and experience, so as to develop a policy on how best to limit the potential for acts of extreme violence which could affect our members.

We bear in mind that such incidents could easily result in an SFO, with all the accompanying stress and bureaucratic intrusion – not to mention the inevitable feelings of responsibility – even guilt – on the part of our members involved in such cases.

Risk Assessments, where there is a perceived possible risk of such extreme violence to staff or service users, need to be done; they could result in identifying the need for a metal detector at certain offices, the decision to abandon the 'visible' or 'community payback' element at an unpaid work project, or in the establishment of a direct alarm from a Probation office through to the local police station.

We need members' views! Please send your ideas or comments to John Hague/Nicky Kenney, Co-Chairs of H&S Committee – via Margaret Pearce mpearce@napo.org.uk or 020 7223 4887

**Tim Wilson**  
National Vice Chair

## Branch Reps' Courses 2007

### Building the Union – Organisation and Recruitment

25-28 June 2007

Wortley Hall, nr Sheffield

This is a branch development course and is suitable for Branch Officers and Branch Committee members. The course will look at various organising models, the importance of membership involvement and how to achieve it.

### Representing Members (for black members only)

17-20 September 2007

T&G Centre, Eastbourne

This course is designed specifically for black members in Napo providing representation to members involved in disciplinary and grievance proceedings. This course will be facilitated by a black tutor.

**Please contact your Branch Chair/ Secretary/Convenor for further details and a registration form or Cynthia Griffith at Chivalry Road on cgriffith@napo.org.uk or 020 7223 4887.**

## Adverts

### Pefkohori (Halkidiki)

New 2 bed apartment in coastal resort. Sleeps up to six. Open-plan kitchen, diner, lounge. 3 balconies, private garden, BBQ, views of adjacent olive groves/hillside. Air-con/modern decor. £250-£400/week.

07974 302780

Janine.Heatherley@googlemail.com

### Beaches Guest House, Whitby

A friendly welcome awaits you from resident proprietor Tamsin Breffit. 01947 605429. 07950 866496. Located on West Cliff, close to the beach, harbour and town centre. Recently refurbished. 6 lovely, double rooms all en-suite with power showers and TV. Full English breakfast: vegetarian alternative available. £27.50 per person per night.

### Andalucia, Southern Spain

Spacious 3 bed. 2 bath. apartment. Sleeps up to 6. Large private balcony-sea and mountain views. Satellite TV, a/c. 2 Large pools, children's pool, spacious gardens, small bar. Beaches, local bars & restaurants. Year round sun. Almeria/Murcia airports.

For rates/info/photos/travel advice: [sanjuanholidays.com](http://sanjuanholidays.com) or 0114 250 8221

### Grange Over Sands

Lake District. Four nights £140. Longer stays by arrangement. Luxurious two bedroom first floor apartment in quaint Edwardian coastal town. Patio garden with views over bay. Good road and rail links.

For information or bookings phone Sherry Barrass on 01772 335426 or 07815 148205.

### Andalusia

Beautiful villa to rent, located in the Sierra Cabrera mountains, 20 minutes from the sea. Sleeps 4 two bedrooms/bathrooms, sitting and dining rooms, terraces and swimming pool. Almaria airport is 45 minutes away. £350 per week.

Contact Karen on 01295 788378 or email [frank.kenna@lineone.net](mailto:frank.kenna@lineone.net).

### Northumberland Coast

Comfortable self contained spacious apartment. Grade II listed building close to beach. Sea views to Holy Island. Seabird sanctuaries nearby and hill walking. Three bed, sleeps up to eight. Child reductions

Phone 01670 516348 or email [dorothylater@hotmail.com](mailto:dorothylater@hotmail.com)

### Kapparis nr Protaras, Cyprus

New, quality, spacious 2 bed apartment, sleeps 6. TV, DVD, communal pools, air con, 10 mins to beaches and all amenities, car park space. Available from April 2007. From £175 to £250 weekly. School holiday and winter break discounts available.

Contact June on 07917 401614 or email [junelatibeaudiere@btinternet.com](mailto:junelatibeaudiere@btinternet.com).

### Turkish Riviera – Side

2 bed apartment for rent, shared swimming pool. Sun 300 days a year, 15 mins walk to sandy beach, beautiful mountain scenery. 1 hr from Antalya airport. April, May, June, and October £160 pw. July, August and September £175 pw.

e-mail [carole.lewis@cafass.gov.uk](mailto:carole.lewis@cafass.gov.uk) for brochure

### East Yorkshire Coast

Stunning Grade II listed cottage with secluded garden in Hornsea. Next to the Mere, 10 mins from beach and on the Trans Penine Trail. Many original features - cobbled walls, beams, open fire and close to local amenities.

Telephone Tracy on 07739 580548 and visit our website on [www.hornseacottage.co.uk](http://www.hornseacottage.co.uk)

### La Manga del Mar Menor

Spain. Two bedroom, two bathroom apartment overlooking secluded beach. Two pools, tennis courts. Unspoilt traditional area on La Manga peninsular. Near golf courses, beaches, marinas. From £175pw.

Call Val Roberts 07990515780 or [roberts764@btinternet.com](mailto:roberts764@btinternet.com)

### Southern Spain

Three bed villa with private pool, Vinuela, Andalusia. Situated in a tiny village in area of outstanding beauty. Malaga airport 50 mins, Granada airport 90 mins. From £250 per week. 10% discount for Napo Members.

Visit our website at [www.casa-animarc.co.uk](http://www.casa-animarc.co.uk) or contact Jenny Yates on 07712367705, e-mail: [jennyates438@btinternet.com](mailto:jennyates438@btinternet.com)

### Foothills of the Pyrenees

Riverside village house with 3 double beds (Campagne-sur-Aude). TV, DVD, washing machine. Stunning scenery, sporting facilities, historical sites 60 mins. Airport 45 mins. Prices from £150-£250 per week.

Contact Fiona or Paul on 01273 270198. [f.bauermeister@ntlworld.com](mailto:f.bauermeister@ntlworld.com) mob 07717151642

### La Manga Mar Menor

Spain. Sea front, three bedroom, two bathroom fully equipped apartment on unique Spanish peninsular at La Manga. Very restful location. From £175pw. Fly to Murcia close by.

[www.la-manga-spain.co.uk](http://www.la-manga-spain.co.uk)  
Tel: Margaret Fraser 01527 879446

### Vendee, France

Special half price rates - 3 new gites, fully self-contained. 3 mins from wine route. 40 mins from beaches. Lovely quiet rural life. Modern shopping centre and vibrant night life. Travel by ferry or fly to La Rochelle.

[www.frenchescape.co.uk](http://www.frenchescape.co.uk). Tel:01622 609615

### Mont St Michel, Brittany

Three well-equipped cottages (sleeping 4, 4 & 7) in rural hamlet. Beaches, gardens, walks, watersports, golf, cycling, tennis, riding. Close ferries and Ryanair flights.

[www.domaine-des-feins.com](http://www.domaine-des-feins.com)  
Tel:00 33 299 80 29 11

### Change of details form

Important: If any of your details have changed please fill out this form and return, free of charge, to Napo, FREEPOST LON10564, London SW11 1YZ or e-mail your new details to [membership@Napo.org.uk](mailto:membership@Napo.org.uk)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership no. (eg M012345)\* \_\_\_\_\_

New grade \_\_\_\_\_

New address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Is this address your Work  or Home  address? (Please tick one)

Work telephone no. \_\_\_\_\_

Date effective from \_\_\_\_\_

\* Your membership number can be found on the top right-hand corner of the address label on your envelope.

I have changed Probation Area

from \_\_\_\_\_

to \_\_\_\_\_

Date effective from: \_\_\_\_\_

I have left the Probation Service

I have left CAFCASS

Date left: \_\_\_\_\_

# A special AGM for Probation's Centenary year

Planning is well advanced for the AGM at Scarborough on 19 to 21 October.

There will be a centenary theme throughout the event.

## Programme

On the Friday morning, while the CAF/CASS Section holds its AGM, probation members will be able to participate in a discussion on the future of the probation service in the next century. Invited speakers for this debate include Lord Falconer, the new Justice Minister, and Baroness Gibson.

The key speaker at the CAF/CASS event on Saturday morning will be the Chair of the CAF/CASS Board, Baroness Pitkeathley. The Minister, Parmjit Dhanda has also been invited, and it is hoped he will be able to make it this year.

The probation session on Saturday will see a debate on the role of the Probation Service in public protection. Invited speakers include Christine Lawrie, Chief Executive of the PBA, and Tim Bryan, who is Chaplain at HMP Wandsworth and formerly a DCI from Nottingham Police seconded to the Public Protection Unit.

## Entertainment

This year the fee for early registration, before 28 September, will be £25 (£45 for late registration or registration on the day). This will, however, include tickets for evening events on both the Friday and Saturday (including a free drink – alcoholic or otherwise on the Saturday evening). The final line up of bands is still to be confirmed but there will be a live band and disco on the Friday and it is hoped to have top local party band, The Goose Horns, on the Saturday. Saturday night will also see something a bit different with a Ceroc/Jive session, including exhibition dances and the chance to learn some simple steps and then put them into practice.

## New feature

There will be a video-showing from 9.00am on the Sunday morning with coffee, fruit juice and croissants, to try to get everyone into the hall for a prompt, but slightly later, start to conference business at 10.00am.

## Crèche

As in previous years there will be a free crèche throughout the business of conference and this year opening hours will be extended to include the early evening fringe meetings. The crèche will be provided by Wendy House, who were with us in Eastbourne in 2006, and children will be guaranteed a good time with activities, outings and refreshments (including tea for those who are staying late).

We also plan to have exhibitions – including the 'Centenary Time Line'

exhibition that was developed for the Centenary Conference on 1-2 May and Napo's own 'Changing Lives' exhibition. Alongside this there will be the usual array of fringe meetings, stalls and special guest speakers. So far, Shami Chakrabarti, Director of Liberty, Brendan Barber, General Secretary of the TUC and John McDonnell MP, Secretary of the Justice Unions Parliamentary Group, have been invited.

## A grand venue

The Spa Complex Conference Centre has been refurbished since Napo was last there

in 2003 and new, state of the art, staging has been combined with restoration of the splendid Grand Hall to its former glory. It is also fully compliant with the DDA and information on access etc. can be obtained from Chivalry Road on, or prior to, registration.

This will be an AGM to remember. Make sure you don't miss it.

**Register before 28 September for the reduced registration cost of £25 (£15 retired, unemployed and TPO members).**

**Members interested in attending AGM should register using the form included with this issue of Napo News or online at [www.napo.org.uk](http://www.napo.org.uk). Contact your branch to arrange accommodation and discuss transport/subsidy arrangements.**