



Ministry of
JUSTICE
National Offender
Management Service

Cheshire
Probation



Cheshire Probation Trust

Community Payback Annual Report 2011

Foreword



Community Payback is an important part of Cheshire Probation Trust's delivery of services to local communities. During the 12 month period between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2011 just under 150,000 hours of unpaid labour was performed by supervised offenders across the four Local Authority areas of Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington.

This unpaid work has been delivered across a wide range of projects, many of which were nominated by members of the public. The projects have all been demanding for offenders, responsive to local need and priorities, and have made a tangible difference to the local community. This annual report seeks to provide further information and detail about Community Payback and the impact it has had in terms of making our communities cleaner, safer places to be.

Angela Cossins
Chief Executive
Cheshire Probation Trust

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Overview

Probation Trust and Geographic Area

Cheshire Probation Trust

Cheshire Probation moved to Trust status on 1 April 2010. Our work involves serving local people by building safer communities, reducing crime, ensuring public protection and helping to prevent people from becoming victims of crime.

Cheshire Probation Trust is one of 35 Probation Trusts across England and Wales. Probation Trusts receive funding from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, which brings together the headquarters of the Probation Service and HM Prison Service to enable more effective delivery of services. Probation Trusts have a duty to protect the public, to ensure the proper punishment of offenders and to rehabilitate offenders. We work closely with other criminal justice agencies including the Police, the Prison Service, Her Majesty's Court Service and the Crown Prosecution Service as part of the Cheshire Criminal Justice Board and with many other partner agencies in the voluntary, private and public sectors. This includes membership of the Cheshire Leadership Team consisting of the Chief Executives of the four Unitary Local Authorities, the Chief Fire Officer, the Chief Constable and the Chief Executive of Cheshire Probation Trust.

To enhance local accountability and engagement across Cheshire and to enable the delivery of services to meet local need, we have restructured our operations into four Local Delivery Units (LDUs), each led by an Assistant Chief Executive. The LDUs are designed specifically to match the four Cheshire Unitary Authorities of Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington. LDUs have a new statutory responsibility for representation from Probation at Community Safety Partnerships, aimed at reducing reoffending, with the other responsible authorities being the Police, Police Authorities, Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue Services and Primary Care Trusts.

We employ over 400 staff across nine sites. These include two industrial units in Ellesmere Port and Widnes for the purposes of Community Payback delivery. The sites are located in:

- Chester (including a new Headquarters building located in Chester to be occupied in 2012)
- Crewe
- Ellesmere Port (Community Payback Unit)

- Macclesfield
- Runcorn
- Warrington
- Widnes (Community Payback Unit)
- Winsford

The Chief Executive, together with five Assistant Chief Executives, form the Trust's Senior Management Team. The middle management team includes a range of managers who undertake various roles, from Senior Probation Officers in operational locations and prisons to non-operational managerial roles in Human Resources, Finance and Performance.

Seconded staff also work in the three Cheshire prisons – HMP Risley, HMP & YOI Styal and HMYOI Thorn Cross and within the Local Authority Youth Offending Services.

At any one time, we supervise approximately 4,100 offenders over the age of 18*, who are either sentenced to a Community Order by the Court or who are released from prison on Licence. (*The Probation Service also supervises a small number of offenders between the ages of 16-18 who are sentenced to an Unpaid Work Requirement by the Court). Each offender has an offender manager who manages their sentence from beginning to end, both in custody and in the community. The offender manager works with the offender to produce a sentence plan for all the different parts of the sentence, working in partnership with other agencies as required.

As part of the wider Offender Management role, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) has been introduced. IOM is a multi-agency project aimed at delivering an integrated approach to the management of all high risk offenders. It brings together partner agencies – Police, Probation, Youth Offending Services, Local Authorities and Third Sector Agencies – to improve the joint management of those offenders who pose a significant risk of re-offending in our communities. The amount of work undertaken with each offender is determined by the frequency and nature of their offending. It may include drugs and alcohol treatment, assistance with basic numeracy and literacy or advice on housing and financial issues.

Each year, Cheshire Probation Trust staff produce approximately 4,000 reports for sentencers in the Magistrates' and Crown Courts and in 2011 supervised the completion of nearly 150,000 hours of Community Payback by offenders sentenced to an Unpaid Work Requirement. We also work closely with victims of serious crimes through our statutory obligation to contact victims of sexual or violent offences, where the offender is sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment or more.

Over the past few years, Cheshire Probation Trust, together with Cheshire Constabulary, the Prison Service and other partner agencies in Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Cheshire, Halton and Warrington, have co-operated to ensure that the risk posed to the public by the more dangerous offenders is minimised.

This is achieved through the statutory arrangement of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (known as MAPPA). The Police, Probation and Prison Service are the Responsible Authority to ensure that MAPPA is effectively implemented and managed. However for MAPPA to be effective, the support and assistance of many other agencies across Cheshire, Halton and Warrington is required to manage high risk offenders. These include Local Authorities (including Child Protection staff), Youth Offending Services, Health Trusts and Housing Services.

Once an offender becomes the subject of MAPPA, their case is reviewed on a regular basis and each agency will be required to undertake certain actions.

We will continue to work closely with all our stakeholders including the public, to increase confidence about the work of Cheshire Probation Trust so that the desired outcomes for offenders and victims are achieved and the public are protected, resulting in safer communities for us all.



Unpaid Offender Hours 2011

Cheshire Probation Trust has worked effectively in local communities across 2011, providing:

Total number of offender hours	147,568
Offender hours in individual placements	49,159
Offender hours included in conjunction with Employment Training and Education activity	1,844

Below is a brief overview of the number of offender hours in comparison with earlier years:

	2009	2010	2011
Unpaid work hours	176,222	169,613	147,568
Value to community at minimum wage	£1,009.8k	£938.8k	£875k

Projects Completed

Cheshire Probation Trust completed 79 projects in 2011. It should be noted though that the projects completed figure takes no account of ongoing projects, standing at: Cheshire West and Chester (33), Cheshire East (39), Halton (7) and Warrington (14). Projects are identified in a variety of ways, with the public being able to nominate projects that they would like to see completed in their local community. This can be via Cheshire Probation Trust's website, using a dedicated telephone number or promotion at public consultation meetings involving partner agencies (eg. Police and Local Authorities).



January 1 - 31 December 2011	Projects completed
Cheshire West and Chester	26
Cheshire East	35
Halton	8
Warrington	10

Successful Completion of Community Payback Sentences

1,015 offenders successfully completed the Community Payback requirement of their Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order in Cheshire during 2011. In doing so, nearly 150,000 hours were worked across a range of small, medium and large projects, often jointly with the Police to improve the local community and to make it a safer place to live. This represents approximately £875,000 of free labour for the benefit of local people based on the minimum wage as at 1 January 2011.

Beneficiaries

Cheshire Probation Trust works with a wide range of individuals and groups, known as beneficiaries, who benefit from Community Payback. At 31 December 2011 Cheshire Probation Trust was working with 127 beneficiaries. Some require "one-off" projects, with other partnerships being longer standing, in some cases over many years. The Trust also works in partnership with some beneficiaries, for example, charities, where suitable Community Payback offenders are placed directly with the organisation concerned. These are known as agency placements. Offenders working in agencies are under the supervision of the



agency involved whilst they undertake their Community Payback, although they remain managed by Cheshire Probation Trust.

Examples of beneficiaries include local churches, mosques, community centres, schools, local authorities, charities and voluntary groups. The work carried out for these organisations varies depending on requirements and all offenders and Community Payback projects are the subject of robust risk assessments.

Cheshire Probation Trust undertakes an annual survey whereby all Community Payback beneficiaries receive a questionnaire to obtain their views and to gauge satisfaction rates. In 2011, 92% of the respondents were satisfied with the work undertaken by Community Payback. The survey resulted in 38 replies, a 52% return rate. Comments included:

- Cannot praise the scheme highly enough – we were very impressed.
- We have been involved with Cheshire Probation Trust for over 10 years and we have generally had a very positive experience. We have even had offenders returning to do voluntary work when their Community Payback is completed.
- I think it is an excellent system that benefits the offender and the wider community. It breaks down a lot of barriers.
- Excellent experience, really well organised and the job carried out was beyond initial expectation.
- The Scout and Guide leaders who use our building are very pleased with the outcome. Our building looks smart again. Thank you very much for all your hard work.

Testimonials

Cheshire Probation Trust also regularly receives letters of appreciation from beneficiaries and local residents acknowledging the work completed by Community Payback teams. Below are some extracts:

- We have been very blessed in having X working with us as without his help and expertise we would still be improving the room next year. X proved to be reliable and punctual and we are delighted with the quality of his work (beneficiary)
- It was really good to be able to get to the family grave without a struggle. This is thanks to the Community Payback team who have been cutting grass, clearing graves and cutting hedges. A lot of people are very grateful to you so thank you very much (member of the public).

- I am very grateful for the work undertaken by Community Payback team. They keep the churchyard clear of debris from groups of youths who congregate to drink alcohol, and keep the grass and overhanging trees under control. The groups also assisted in the local park achieving Green Flag status. I know that my elderly neighbours are more than grateful for Community Payback clearing up the leaves on the pathway next to the church which leads to the Doctors' surgery. Thanks and keep up the good work (local resident).



- I visited my father's grave and wanted to say thank you for the excellent work being carried out by the Community Payback team. I am thrilled to see the grounds maintained to such a high standard, including the far end of the church grounds which had become overgrown (member of the public).



- Thank you for the tremendous work that you have done in producing a footpath for the right of way on the field. The project has been a great success and will benefit the community for years to come. The lads have worked hard and the project supervisors have shown great support and leadership (beneficiary).

- Thank you to the Community Payback team for organising this thoroughly worthwhile activity. Since the work has been completed, and the site revived with an array of new plants and shrubs, the Parish Council has received a lot of positive feedback from grateful residents. Thanks to the hard work and effort of your people, our village memorial site is now looking resplendent and fit for purpose in time for the laying of wreaths on Remembrance Sunday (beneficiary).
- The support given by the Community Payback team is really appreciated. The work carried out has made such a positive difference to the local environment (local resident).

Developments

New Initiatives

The Specification, Benchmarking and Costing (SBC) programme was introduced in 2009 by the Ministry of Justice. The SBC programme as it is known produces costed specifications for all offender services including the delivery of Community Payback. These specifications identify what needs to be done to deliver the outcomes identified in the specification efficiently and effectively. Building upon the review of how Cheshire Probation Trust delivers Community Payback, an Action Plan was produced which identified how this Court Requirement could be delivered more efficiently and effectively. During 2011, this Action Plan has been implemented which has resulted in a number of positive changes including the development of specialist women only provision and an increase in the ratio of offenders to supervisors, making a more cost effective service. Additionally, Service Level Agreements with Local Authority partners have been established which ensure that offenders are properly punished, that the public can see them carrying out their sentence and that local community concerns, particularly regarding local environmental problems are addressed. Cheshire Probation Trust has also been taking forward the recommendations arising from the joint HM Inspector of Probation/Ofsted Offender Management Inspection which took place in May 2011, and is working with Manchester College to accredit the skills learnt by offenders on Community Payback projects.

Criminal Justice Partners

Cheshire Probation Trust works closely with criminal justice partners including Cheshire Constabulary (see 'Work with other organisations' section below). Other criminal justice agencies with whom Cheshire Probation Trust is closely aligned are the two Youth Offending Services in Cheshire, Warrington and Halton, as Cheshire Probation Trust supervises young offenders aged 16 and 17 who have been sentenced to an Unpaid Work Requirement as part of their Youth Rehabilitation Order.



Work with other Organisations

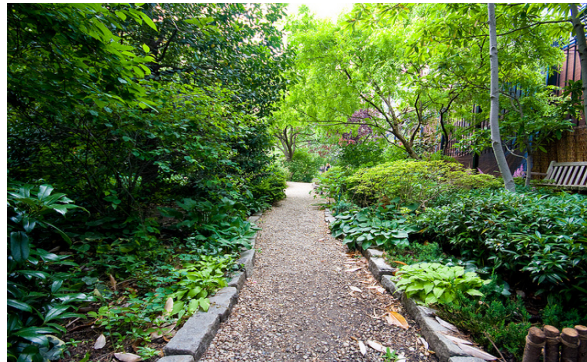
Cheshire Fire and Rescue

Cheshire Probation Trust works closely with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service in a number of ways. The two organisations work jointly to reduce the number of arson incidents, particularly around Bonfire Night, with Community Payback teams dismantling and removing unauthorised fires. Community Payback teams also

distribute leaflets to households promoting fire safety and displaying fire safety stickers.

Community Payback Partnership

The Community Payback Partnership began in 2007 as a partnership between Cheshire Constabulary, Cheshire County Council Community Safety and Cheshire Probation Trust in three pilot areas, namely Ellesmere Port, Warrington Central and Western Rural areas with oversight of this pilot project being provided by Cheshire Constabulary's Public Safety and Reassurance Board. The significant aspect of this project was its design to address community concerns at a very local level and involve the co-supervision of offenders completing their Community Payback by both Cheshire Probation Trust and Police Community Support Officers. The local communities in Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington are encouraged to identify problems and concerns at Police Forums, Neighbourhood Action Team and Community Action Meetings, which Community Payback could help resolve. The co-supervision of offenders completing Community Payback makes the work project highly visible and the local Police Community Support Officer is able to report back to local residents on the work that has been completed. The work undertaken by these teams includes the refurbishment of Community Centres and High Impact Community Clean-up Days designed to improve the environment and make the community safer.



Joint work with Skills and Employment or ETE

It is recognised that there is a link between unemployment and offending.

Education, Training and Employment (ETE) provision is available for those offenders, including Community Payback offenders, with poor employment related skills and a history of unemployment or unstable employment. These offenders are encouraged to take the opportunity to engage in employment and educational opportunities which will increase their employability which in turn will reduce their likelihood of re-offending. For Community Payback offenders, the time spent undertaking these activities can count towards a maximum of 20% of their total Community Payback hours.

During the initial induction with their Offender Manager, all offenders are screened to identify their education and/or training needs using the nationally recognised initial basic skills checker tool. If this checker identifies that the offender has ETE needs, they are referred by their Offender Manager for a more detailed assessment. This will identify what ETE provision is most appropriate for that offender. In addition to this initial screening, when offenders attend Community Payback they are also informed about the ETE provision.

All Offender Managers are kept informed of all ETE initiatives to ensure that referrals are made not just at the initial induction stage but throughout the sentence as and when the need for ETE intervention becomes apparent. Community Payback Placement Managers and Supervisors are also regularly briefed about any local educational or employment opportunities which they can promote when offenders attend to complete their Community Payback and they can refer the offender directly to such provision.

Every week a Work Club is held at each Probation Office. At these sessions offenders are assessed for their job readiness and they are given advice and guidance with regard to gaining skills and qualifications and helped to complete job searches. Additionally, Cheshire Probation Trust is in a consortium of the 5 North West Probation



Trusts to deliver a National Offender Management Service (NOMS) European Social Fund project. This project is designed to improve the employment prospects of offenders.

During 2011 there has been a Community Payback specific ETE contract held by the North-West project operating with Barrowmore Industries. This has involved a significant amount of cooperation and liaison between

Community Payback staff and the staff at Barrowmore to ensure the consistent attendance of offenders on a weekly basis at this specialist ETE provision and tracking their ETE progress. The partnership has facilitated offenders to improve their employment related skills, gaining externally validated awards as well as completing demanding work for the benefit of the community.

Working closely with Manchester College, Cheshire Probation Trust is embedding learning and skills acquisition in the delivery of Community Payback and offenders are gaining credits and awards from the work they are carrying out in the local community. This helps increase the possibility of offenders gaining employment which will reduce the likelihood of them re-offending.

Achievements

Media Coverage

The media is an important communication medium for increasing public awareness and confidence regarding Community Payback, for informing the public about the type of work which is completed in their local community and also providing an opportunity for the public to nominate Community Payback projects.

During 2011, Cheshire Probation Trust raised the profile of Community Payback in the county's media with the majority of newspaper cuttings sourced about Cheshire Probation Trust being about Community Payback.

Copies of press releases are also posted on Cheshire Probation Trust's website (www.cheshireprobation.org.uk).

NOMS Wildlife Award

Whitley Park, Warrington

Cheshire Probation Trust celebrated success during the year as winners of the Community and Outreach Project category for the 2010 National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Wildlife Award. The Trust was also judged to be Highly Commended for the overall national Award. The announcement was made during during 2011 for work carried out by Community Payback offenders at Whitley Park, Lower Whitley. Whitley Park is a former sand quarry which has been filled to form a lake with extensive grounds and is now home to a variety of native wildlife, flora and fauna. Before the Community Payback team's intervention, the site had deteriorated due to long term neglect. Angela Cossins, Cheshire Probation Trust's Chief Executive said "I am delighted that Cheshire Probation Trust has been formally recognised in this way. This national Award reflects the hard work and dedication of the Community Payback team and is an excellent example of how Community Payback benefits the local community". Clifford Straw from Whitley Parish Council said "This Award is well-deserved as the team has been a tremendous help in improving and maintaining the project for the benefit of our community, from which we have had very positive feedback. Many of the workers seem to have taken a personal interest in the project, giving them a sense of purpose, and are proud of their achievements". The award was presented to Elaine Hamlett, Practice Manager, and Terry Purcell, Supervisor, at a ceremony at HMP Woodhill, Milton Keynes, in May 2011.



Case Studies

Case Study 1 - Punishment

Cheshire West and Chester – St Wilfred’s Church, Davenham

Background

Tom* (*name has been changed) was sentenced to a Community Order with a 200 hour Unpaid Work Requirement in March 2011 for an offence of theft. The purpose of this sentence was to provide an effective punishment in the community.

Activity

Maintenance of church grounds.

Result

The Community Payback Offender Manager interviewed Tom to ascertain whether the order fulfilled its objective in terms of providing an effective punishment. Tom had worked on various group projects including St. Wilfred’s Church in Davenham.

Tom stated that he felt he had been dealt with fairly by the criminal justice system in his sentencing and that he believed it is a good idea to punish people by restricting their free time. He added that Community Payback is actually helping him to become motivated to gain employment and to this end he has completed a CV through his Employment, Education and Training (ETE) time allocation to good effect. As Tom says, “This sentence has been a big slap on the wrist”.

Beneficiary views

The beneficiaries at St. Wilfred’s have been effusive in their praise of the efforts by the Community Payback Team in helping to maintain the grounds and also carrying out building maintenance. This was much in evidence in an article in the October 2011 edition of the parish magazine. “For a few years people have been getting lost in the cemetery, fighting their way through the overgrown vegetation. Then came the Cheshire Probation Trust team to the rescue, strimming and mowing the graveyard. The vegetation is nearly all cleared, and safe to walk through.”

Public views

The Community Payback Practice Manager visited the project site on a number of occasions and is able to testify to the positive comments made by members of the public who are now able to pay their respects to loved ones in a more conducive environment. Your “lads and lasses are doing a grand job” is a notable comment.

Case Study 2 - Community Benefit

Warrington – Walton Hall and Gardens, Walton

Background

The Community Payback Manager was approached by the Parks and Woodlands Service Manager from Warrington Borough Council after Terry had seen other work completed by the Warrington Community Payback team at a high profile project at Warrington Town Hall

Activity

The groups maintain and plant out herbaceous borders, cutting back shrubbery on the site, raking leaves, clearing pathways, preparing and painting street furniture and improving the environment around the car parks. The groups also assist the Rangers with the children's zoo. The works are commissioned by the Head Gardener at Walton Hall who works closely with the Community Payback supervisor and group. He provides training and expertise in horticultural methods. Groups attending for this project are part of a pilot scheme with Manchester College. This scheme takes place over a three to six week period and allows offenders to gain qualifications in horticulture with a certificate from Manchester College.

Result

Walton Hall and Gardens are looking much improved and are safer for pedestrians as all pathways are cleared of leaves and other slip hazards. The staff at the Walton Hall value and appreciate the work done by the groups and are keen to assist with the educational input of Manchester College, the Head Gardener and Animal Ranger. Offenders are being given opportunities to learn whilst undertaking Community Payback and gain qualifications to assist them to find employment and reduce the risk of reoffending.

Offender views

The feedback from the offenders involved in this project has been very positive. They are proud to be working on such a high profile, prestigious site with historical significance, which is visited by in excess of 100,000 people over the year. The offenders also appreciate the opportunity to gain qualifications. They also respond favourably to verbal feedback from members of the public using the park.

Beneficiary views

Walton Hall and Garden's Ranger said, "I would be grateful if you could pass on my thanks to all the people who have worked so hard on keeping the children's zoo path free from leaves. It is not one of the best jobs to be doing at this time of year, saying that it's a very important job as the leaves become very slippery when wet at this time of year damaging the paths and making them slippery for our visiting public. So once again a big thank you to the supervisors and Community Payback workers for all the hard work".

Public views

Feedback from visitors to the Walton Hall and Gardens has been very positive. A member of the public recently commented that the park has been transformed following Community Payback's involvement.

Case Study 3 - Rehabilitation

Cheshire East – Streetscape, Crewe

Background

Streetscape is a division of Cheshire East Council that concentrates on the improvement and regeneration of areas of Crewe that are subject to anti-social behaviour, fly tipping, graffiti and general states of misuse.

Streetscape approached Cheshire Probation Trust to see if the Community Payback team could help with the general cleaning and clearing of sites which had been nominated by the public, and areas that have become overgrown and unusable by the general public.

Streetscape would provide the equipment and means of rubbish disposal and Cheshire Probation Trust would provide the work force.

Activity

A list of work is provided by Streetscape on each occasion Cheshire Probation Trust attends and in priority order the clean up of offensive graffiti, badly littered alleyways and park areas takes place. These are areas that have become dangerous due to anti-social behaviour and drug use. The offenders clean up play areas for the children and remove graffiti and glass from the play equipment and surrounding areas.

Hedges and shrubs are cut back to enable good sightlines for the Police and general public to ensure the areas are free from misuse and anti-social behaviour.

Result

The areas identified are the subject of extensive cleaning and clearing. This project receives positive feedback from the public who are around while the work is being carried out and who benefit from the process of cleaning and clearing. It also discourages anti-social behaviour and further graffiti and reduces the risk of crime.

Offender Views

This work is instantaneous and gives the workers a good sense of achievement when the public praise them for their hard work directly. They also see first hand how the actions of a few affect the lives of so many in a negative way. It also shows what they

do in the reparation for their offending can vastly improve the lives of others and improve the areas in which they live.

Beneficiary views

The beneficiary is looking to enter into a long term agreement with Cheshire Probation Trust to ensure the work continues as it has proven such a success. They are achieving a greater amount of customer request clearances which in turn is ensuring them community support. The areas of the town worst hit by criminal damage and anti-social behaviour are being targeted on a regular basis and will hopefully, long term, lead to a reduction of activity.

Public views

This project receives positive feedback from the public who are able to view the work first hand while it is being undertaken.

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If you would like this Annual Report in another format, please contact:

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