



# COMMUNITY PAYBACK MAYORAL PROJECTS

# FOREWORD

I am delighted to be associated with the Mayoral Project. Local councils are at the centre of their communities and mayors are the most visible representatives of these councils. It is fitting that they should have a say in the type of work offenders carry out in their local areas.

This brochure highlights some of the excellent and valuable projects chosen by mayors to ensure that offenders sentenced to Unpaid Work give something back to communities which have suffered from crime.

This is the first year that the Probation Service has worked with mayors across England and Wales. It has been a very successful partnership and one which I hope will go from strength to strength.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Hanson'.

Rt Honourable David Hanson MP  
Minister of Prisons and Probation

**Last year the National Probation Service invited some of the country's mayors to adopt Unpaid Work projects in their locality. It was the first time mayors had been approached as a group and the ensuing partnership has been one of Probation's most successful.**

**Thirty-six of the 42 probation areas in England and Wales took part in the Mayoral Project. It was impossible, in one year, to involve all the countries' mayors. But those who were approached were enthusiastic and supportive. All visited their projects regularly and some even spent time working alongside the offenders.**

**A total of 63 projects were undertaken – some are still ongoing. Many have brought derelict areas back into use or renovated popular buildings used by communities. Between them they represent many thousands of hours of unpaid work which would not have been done otherwise because of lack of money.**

**Now more mayors are being invited to take part in the Mayoral Project 2008/9.**

*Some of the local authorities that took part in the 2007 Mayoral Projects are: Peterborough, Mid Bedfordshire, Hastings, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, Swindon, Easington, County Durham, Chester, Ipswich, South Kesteven, Lincolnshire, Rugby, Islington, Doncaster, Ludlow, Shropshire, Newtown, Powys, North Tyneside, Rhyl, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, Leicester, Merthyr Tydfil, Derby, Dover, Wigan, Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland.*

## County Durham

In County Durham offenders work throughout the week on environmental projects suggested by Easington District Council. The Mayor, Councillor Margaret Nugent, launched work on clearing a former garage site in the village.

Offenders who take part in the project will also be given the opportunity to work towards qualifications in horticulture, health and safety and other relevant subjects through the National Open College Network.



County Durham Probation Service Partnerships Manager Margaret Makinson (centre) with Easington District Council's Landscape Garden Supervisor Rob Ditchburn (right)

## Cheshire

Cheshire Probation Area's Unpaid Work team worked with the Chester Community Safety Partnership to improve the City by cleaning up a section of the historic Chester Rows which has long been the subject of vandalism.

Offenders sentenced to Unpaid Work by the Court removed graffiti and repainted a section of the Rows. A civic launch of the project took place at 2pm on Saturday 3rd November when His Worship the Sheriff of Chester, Councillor Andrew Storrar, visited the site and saw first hand the work being undertaken.

Offenders working on the project were proud to play their part. One said: "I really feel like I'm making a useful contribution to the community, it's definitely brightened up the place". Another added: "The smell around here used to be awful – this will make a big difference."

## Suffolk

In Ipswich, offenders created a fishing platform for anglers with disabilities in the River Gipping.

The materials for the platform were supplied by the Borough Council and the work was done by an Unpaid Work team from

Suffolk. The Mayor, Councillor Inga Lockington, said: "This is a partnership project between the Borough and Suffolk Probation and will result in something really useful to the local community."



Community Payback Supervisor and offenders creating fishing platforms in Ipswich

## Lincolnshire

Councillor Linda Neal, leader of South Kesteven District Council, officially launched the Unpaid Work project at South Kesteven Sports Stadium in Grantham.

The stadium track had recently been refurbished, but the buildings were in desperate need of attention, so offenders on community orders with an Unpaid Work Requirement painted and decorated the entrance, corridors, changing rooms, first aid room and toilets.

Councillor Neal said: "The refurbished sports facilities will be a wonderful asset for the people of the area."

To date 175 offender days have been spent refurbishing the Stadium (average 6 hrs per day), which when equated to the minimum wage (£5.52) is £5,796 worth of labour. An official reopening ceremony took place on 20th February 2008 at 2pm for the unveiling of the Community Payback plaque by Cllr Neal.

## London

A playground in Islington has been transformed by offenders who painted out almost 1,000 square feet of graffiti, painted railings and play equipment and removed and recycled 1.35 tonnes of green waste.

The project was a joint effort by London Probation, the local council and the Metropolitan Police. Children from nearby Rotherfield School painted recycling bags and filled in comments on the work carried out.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Barbara Smith, presented a certificate to head teacher Elaine Adams.

## South Yorkshire

In Doncaster, South Yorkshire, offenders helped renovate Coinsbrough Scout Hut. They spent 1,323 hours on the project.

Councillor Tony Socket, Chair of Council, Doncaster, said: "As one who has worked most of his life with young adults, many of them at risk, I have a strong commitment to encouraging positive engagement in activities which not only provide diversionary interests but hopefully explore a clear pathway to new life skills.

"On my visit to the Conisbrough Scout Hall I was impressed by the decorating skills demonstrated in providing major improvements to the premises. I hope that this example of giving back to the community will become an increasing feature of the work of rehabilitating offenders".



## Warwickshire

The Mayor of Rugby, Councillor Sue Peach, visited offenders refurbishing and redecorating Newbold Village Hall. Councillor Peach said: "It is important that offenders pay something back to communities for their crimes.

This Village Hall serves its community well and with this help will continue to do so for many more years to come.



Councillor Sue Peach (right) visting Newbold Village Hall

## West Mercia

Offenders performing Unpaid Work as part of their community orders helped to construct a straw house for Ludlow's Green Festival. The straw house was formally opened by Mayor of Ludlow, Councillor Marie Glaze, as her first official engagement.

Six offenders and a supervisor worked on the construction for six days. The straw house, which is based in the castle gardens near the castle entrance, is 3.5m square with a chestnut roof. They erected the bales, clad the building with clay and lime and put the roof on.

The straw house is an example of an 'eco-building' constructed almost entirely of low cost, local materials and demonstrates a tried and tested sustainable building technique which results in a very pleasing structure with exceptional insulation properties and requiring limited building skills and small capital outlay.

## Dyfed – Powys

The Mayor of Newtown, Dyfed Powys, Councillor Sue Lawson, backed a project to revamp Newtown Amateur Boxing Club.

The work involved 300 hours of free labour by teams of offenders. The main hall, corridors and toilets were all repainted to give the club a completely new look.

The club is run as a charity and currently has over 40 members. It trains young people aged from 10 to 34.



Offenders constructing the straw house for the Ludlow's Green Festival, West Mercia.

## Northumbria

Offenders on Unpaid Work in North Tyneside are re-decorating and generally enhancing void properties, which are difficult to let. Work has involved decorating the properties and keeping the exterior clean and tidy by litter picking and gardening.

At the moment there are approximately 70 properties across North Tyneside that come under this category, with more homes becoming void on an ongoing basis. Properties are identified across North Tyneside by the council and work commences straight away so buildings are empty for as short a period as possible.

This work has helped the council minimise lost revenue from loss of rent, the properties are more habitable for new tenants who might otherwise

struggle to improve their home and it also helps improve community safety, as vacant properties are vulnerable to vandalism and may otherwise fall into disrepair.

Since the project was launched in May 2007 offenders have worked over 1700 hours unpaid, equating to approximately £9,000 of free labour.

Mayor, Councillor John Harrison, said: "The Mayor's Community Payback scheme is an example of partnership working between Northumbria Probation Area and North Tyneside Council.

"Offenders and the community both have something to learn from each other and, by putting something back into the community, offenders can begin the road to rehabilitation."

## North Wales

A group of offenders helped tame the undergrowth at three beauty spots in Rhyl.

Their aim was to make sure that the nature reserves and woodlands at Brickfield Pond, Bruton Park and Glan Morfa stay safe and accessible to local people and visitors alike.

During a visit to see work underway at the Brickfield Pond, the Mayor, Councillor David Thomas, said: "It's a great asset for the local people and visitors.

"If you look at the statistics, the number of people who come to the Brickfield Pond is absolutely amazing - dog walkers, schools, the elderly and businesses alike.

"The Probation Service is an asset to the communities in regard to the work that offenders do."

## Humberside

Humberside Probation Area has two Mayoral projects starting shortly. The first is at a run-down cemetery in Scunthorpe where offenders will be carrying out a clear-up/tidy-up to improve its appearance. This is due to run twice a week as a team project.

The second project, also in Scunthorpe, involves the refurbishment of houses owned by a Housing Association, which are looking the worse for wear and suffer from graffiti/litter problems.



Councillor David Thomas visits Brickfield Pond to see work carried out by offenders in North Wales

## Bedfordshire

Offenders carrying out Unpaid Work in the community helped to create a mini 'Eden Project' in the middle of Bedfordshire.

The scheme is taking shape at Dunton, a village near Biggleswade, and when completed will provide a totally organic community garden with flower and vegetable beds, trees, walkways and seating areas for visitors and local residents.

The project is being undertaken by the Dunton Community Garden Group, with the assistance of a Community Payback team of offenders who have been carrying out the heavy labour tasks such as digging.

To inaugurate the collaboration between the Garden Group and

the Probation Service, the Chairman of Mid Bedfordshire Council, Mrs Doreen Gurney visited the site in June 2007 to inspect the work done by offenders.

### Autumn

To commemorate Community Payback involvement she planted an apple tree at the site.

The following autumn she revisited Dunton to inspect the progress made by the Community Payback workers and, accompanied by her grandchildren, planted crocuses in one of the flower beds.

The Chairman will install a Community Payback plaque to mark the work completed by the team of offenders once completed in Spring.

## Derbyshire

Derbyshire Community Payback team were contracted to carrying out extensive work at Normanton Lodge, a sheltered accommodation facility in Derby run by Anchor Trust, and to turn an area of wasteland into a leisure and garden area for the residents and for use by the wider community.

Anchor Trust then successfully applied to the Derby City Partnership for a grant towards the cost of the project. The works comprised clearing the area, constructing raised beds, a gravel footpath suitable for wheelchair access and a Boules pitch.

### Reception

Between July and October, 47 offenders worked on the project with two supervisors for a total of 563 hours. A further 17 offenders carried out 209 hours in the Unpaid Work workshop manufacturing and refurbishing furniture for the project.

This is just one of a number of planned Mayoral projects, and the Derby Mayor, Councillor Pauline Latham is very supportive of the work. This has included holding a Mayor's Reception to celebrate the success of Derbyshire's Bird and Bat Box project.



Councillor Pauline Latham and Neil Wagstaff, Divisional Community Punishment Manager, at the opening of the project.

## Kent

The High Sheriff of Kent, Nigel Wheeler, visited a hydro-electric project in Dover to affirm his support for a Community Payback project, through which offenders are being made to pay back the planet as well as the community.

Crabble Corn Mill, in Lower Road, River, is the only working water mill in Kent. It is operated by a charitable trust and still grinds corn which is sold on site.

Teams of offenders, carrying out Community Payback, removed 50 tonnes of silt while digging out the wheel pit and water course, removed soil with buckets and drilled out concrete to enable power to be generated via hydro-electric turbines that have now been installed.

The electricity will enable the Mill to become self-sufficient and sell back the excess to the National Grid.

Mr Wheeler said: "As a magistrate I am keen to support the work done by probation. I know there are many unsung heroes who deserve recognition for the difficult and challenging work they do with offenders. Community Payback punishes offenders in a way that communities can benefit from."

Neil Anthony, The Founder of Crabble Corn Mill, said: "This is work that we couldn't achieve by ourselves and has saved us tens of thousand of pounds. The teams saved us at least £2,000 in installing hydro-electric plant alone."

## Greater Manchester

The Mayor of Wigan, Councillor John O'Brien, visited the Community Payback project he is backing to see how offenders have been working towards making improvements.

Councillor O'Brien, along with representatives from the Greater Manchester Probation Area and local community and faith groups, attended a "Tea, Cake and Samosa" multi-faith event at the Leigh Community Centre on Hope Carr Road, in November to celebrate the work offenders have done to revamp this popular community centre.

Since June 2007, offenders on Unpaid Work requirements as part of their community order have been working both inside and outside the community centre.

Their tasks so far have included:

- Painting and pointing of walls inside the hall and tiling the kitchen area
- Building and replacing radiator covers
- Removing and disposing of rubble, bricks, wood, weeds, litter and other debris around the building
- Preparing the ground to construct a garden area at

the back of the premises

- Repairing and refitting drainpipes

Work will continue until the end of Councillor O'Brien's term as Mayor. In all it will total about 1,500 hours of free labour, carried out by offenders sentenced by the courts and supervised by probation staff. It is worth at least £16,000 (at

an even greater asset for the people of the area."

The Centre is run and managed by Toc H – a community based charity which strives to eliminate social exclusion. It is used by a wide range of groups including a mother and toddler group, drama group, morris dancing, youth advice, luncheon club, karate group and a youth club.



Tea, Cake and Samosa, multi-faith event at the Leigh Community Centre

£6.25 per hour) to the area, for full management of the project including staff, tools and equipment etc.

Councillor O'Brien said: "I am very pleased to see the work at the centre. This project will breathe new life into a much loved and well used facility, right in the heart of a thriving local community. This is a fitting way for offenders to pay something back to their communities for their crimes. Once completed the revamped centre will be

Centre Manager Rebecca Taylor, said: "Revamping the centre is something that we have wanted to do for a long time but have never had the resources. This is a great initiative and we are thrilled that the Mayor chose the Leigh Centre as his project. We are sure the finished results speak for themselves".