



## Enhancing provision, reducing crime – a volunteer working with Essex Probation

Volunteers can play an important role in the work of the Probation Service in Essex, providing assistance for offenders in all manner of welfare tasks which are no longer appropriate for Offender Managers to undertake. SOVA works with Essex Probation to provide the right volunteer for the right job. Alongside their Probation colleagues, volunteers will go the extra mile.

Peter Hathaway is a case in point. Conscientious, active, willing to take on any task, however large or small, he is now 80 years old but he turns up hail, rain or snow.

A retired magistrate and a friend and admirer of the Probation Service, Peter also sits on the informal Youth Panel with the police to divert young people from the Criminal Justice System.. He has been a SOVA volunteer for ten years and bases himself at the Grays Probation Office. He is regularly at the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays and has become a valuable colleague. He inducts new volunteers into the office and is very active in linking them with Offender Managers.

Because he is part of the office, and also because he has built up a rapport with the staff, he has no shortage of tasks to undertake on their behalf. He engages well with all offenders, including the difficult cases, helping to improve their lives and seems to be able to ease their passage through Probation.

He has an innate ability to be able to identify needs and to help offenders access the right solutions, whilst treating them with decency and humanity. He is never at a loss for a task and is clear with the Offender Managers if he is or is not able to work with the individual. Sometimes he identifies a volunteer who would be better placed to undertake the task, maybe through age or gender.

A high reputation and high trust ensures that work flows easily and regularly to him from Offender Managers, who through him, can appreciate the added value that volunteers and partners can bring, enhancing provision to the offender and thereby increasing the likelihood of reduced crime. .