

# ESSEX JUSTICE MATTERS

## Witness Charter on course for national roll-out in 2009

Witnesses in Essex are already benefiting from the enhanced support enshrined in the Witness Charter, implemented in the county in April 2008. Now a national roll-out of the Witness Charter is to commence in all remaining Local Criminal Justice Board areas by the end of March 2009.

The Charter is part of the Government's commitment to put victims and witnesses at the heart of the criminal justice system. It builds on the National Standards of Witness Care issued in 1996; the introduction of Witness Care Units; the roll-out of the Witness Service and use of special measures at court for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses.

The Witness Charter aims to ensure that the best standards are adopted and the same level of service is applied across the whole system locally and nationally. From the moment they report a crime or incident, it is important to give all witnesses the confidence that if they engage in the criminal justice process they will be valued, informed and treated fairly.

Since the Witness Charter was implemented in Essex there have been many examples of good practice within different agencies, and a number of occasions when witnesses have praised the support received. Much has already been achieved, although more remains to be done to ensure that all witnesses receive the support they deserve.

Essex CJB's Victim and Witness Action Team has recently updated its Multi-Agency Protocol on both the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and the Witness Charter. This clearly sets out the responsibilities of each agency under the Codes. Performance is monitored to identify gaps and take remedial action where appropriate.

## Sara Payne appointed first Victims' Champion

Sara Payne, *right*, has agreed to take on the post of Victim's Champion, a new independent public voice for victims of and witnesses to crime.

Speaking after her appointment Ms Payne said: "I look forward to bringing the voice of victims and witnesses to the heart of Government."

After the murder of her daughter Sarah, Ms Payne started a campaign to change the way in which sex offenders are dealt with and supervised in the community.

She worked closely with the Home Office on increasing the right of public access to information about known sex offenders.

Sara Payne, in her role as Victims' Champion, will work with existing victims' groups as well as with the Government's 60 neighbourhood Crime and Justice Co-ordinators, based around England and Wales.

During her one year appointment she will:

- listen to the views and concerns of victims and witnesses
- represent the views of victims and witnesses to Ministers, Government officials and in the media
- challenge criminal justice agencies to further reform their practices in relation to victims and witnesses
- act in an advisory role on victims' issues and prepare the foundations for the appointment of the Victims' Commissioner in 2010.



## Streamlined Process aims to reduce bureaucracy

The Streamlined Process, developed by the police and Crown Prosecution Service, for simple cases in the Magistrates' courts, aims to reduce bureaucracy and complements Criminal Justice Simple, Speedy, Summary (CJ:SSS).

Already tested in seven local criminal justice areas: Cheshire, Gloucestershire, Humberside, London, Suffolk, Staffordshire and Devon and Cornwall; the revised process is now being rolled out nationally.

The Streamlined Process provides a summary of evidence for the prosecution, which reduces the burden of paperwork in the production of a prosecution file.

Essex has secured additional funding to implement the Streamlined Process in 2009 and it is expected that when fully tested and rolled out the following benefits will be realised:

- A reduction in police officer and administrative time preparing a prosecution file;
- Little or no detrimental impact on the guilty plea rate at first hearing;
- Little or no increase in the number of adjournments before trial.

### June staff seminar aims to increase awareness of cross-agency working

Planning is already underway for the next seminar for people working in criminal justice agencies in Essex, which will be held at Osprey House, Chelmsford on 30 June 2009.

Essex Criminal Justice Board is committed to increasing staff awareness of cross-agency working, and confidence in the criminal justice system.



*Some of the delegates at the October seminar*

Delegates are invited from all the criminal justice agencies, as well as partner organisations, including Victim Support and the NSPCC.

To express an interest in attending the next staff seminar, please contact board secretary [Delia Scott](mailto:Delia.scott@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk).  
<mailto:Delia.scott@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk>

### Thurrock Youth Offending Service award

Thurrock Council's Youth Offending Service has received an award from the Jack Petchey Foundation for its service to young people.

The Youth Offending service was awarded £1000 to spend on projects targeting young people at the Regional Achievement Awards held in Hornchurch early this year.

This part of the Foundation's Leaders Award, which allows young people and youth organisations to publicly honour the dedication and commitment of staff and volunteers who 'go the extra mile' to support young people.

Thurrock's YOT support worker Paul Wilding received the award, collecting his Leaders Award medallion and certificate. Two young people, who have benefited from the youth offending service, were also presented with medallions for their efforts in making significant positive changes in their lives over the last year.

Thurrock Youth Offending Service is a multi-agency service staffed and funded by Thurrock Council, Essex Police, National Probation Service and the National Health Service.

## Essex Probation Experience from an offender's perspective



Above, Ben Childs, centre, in role as an offender, with Maureen Vince, Rochford Parish Council Chairman and Jonathan Edosomwar, offender manager. Below, one of the anger management sessions in progress.



The next Probation Experience will be at Colchester on 16 May. To book your place email: [Lynne McKay at Essex Probation](mailto:Lynne.McKay@EssexProbation)

Southend Probation Office played host to about 100 visitors for its 'Probation Experience' day in February. Visitors included magistrates, local councillors, practitioners and members of the public, were given an "offender's insight" into what it is like to go through the Probation Experience. Programme tutor Ben Childs took the role of offender Lee, who was facing a possible jail term for a repeat offence of violent assault, linked to heavy alcohol use.

'Lee' explained what it was like from the pre-sentence report interviews, to actually completing the orders of the court, to undergo anger management training; an alcohol programme as well as an unpaid work requirement. We watched 'Lee' take part in some of the sessions to help him change the behaviours which in the past had led to him committing offences of aggression. Others were learning new skills with the Education Training Agency.

Visitors were also able to sit in on a Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meeting, where representatives of the different agencies agree what measures must be in place for an offender on release from a jail term for serious or sexual assaults.

Among the visitors was Mrs Maureen Vince, Chairman of Rochford Parish Council, who has had first hand experience of unpaid work undertaken by offenders, both on council project and on Almshouses in Rochford.

*"There was some apprehension before it started, but they did a fantastic job. We are very pleased with the quality of the work and the behaviour of those involved,"* said Mrs Vince.

## Hard-hitting postcard campaign aims to cut knife crime among young

Essex Police, the Criminal Justice Board and Essex Crimestoppers, joined forces to produce a hard-hitting postcard campaign against knife crime as part of its 2smart4 series of initiatives.

The graphic images on the front, of a victim of knife crime, were backed by the stark statistic that 1 in 3 knife related injuries are caused by the victims own knife.

The postcards were used in conjunction with a survey in selected schools on the incidence of knife-carrying among students.

Essex Police was given some central government additional funding for the anti-knife crime campaign. This is not because Essex has a high incidence of knife crime, but because Essex Police has shared best practice in reaching young people.

More information on the anti-knife campaign messages can be found at: <http://www.2smart.co.uk/knives>  
<http://www.2smart.co.uk/knives.parents.htm>  
<http://www.bebo.com/itdoesnthavetohappen.htm>



What is on one of the postcards



## Essex CJB's secretary gets award for going 'extra mile'

Delia Scott, has worked in various parts of the criminal justice system for more than 36 years, but is probably best known as the first point of contact for Essex Criminal Justice Board.

In her role as secretary and administrator to the Board, Delia is in regular contact with almost 100 people working within, or with, the criminal justice agencies in Essex.

She was one of the three finalists for the long-service award in the national 2008 Justice Awards.

Delia was also a long service award winner in the Essex CJB's local Justice Awards in both 2007 and 2008.

In 2008 Delia took part in a sponsored tandem skydive, together with six other members of criminal justice agencies in Essex. Between them they raised more than £2,600 for Victim Support's work to help young victims of crime in the county.



*Delia, centre, celebrating her Justice Award, with Caroline Launder, Essex CJB's Business & Performance Manager, left, and Valerie Goodchild, communications manager, at the London finals.*

*More about the Essex Justice Awards can be found at: [www.cjsonline.gov.uk/essex](http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/essex)*

## Who's Who on Essex Criminal Justice Board



**Mary Archer**  
Chief Officer of the National Probation Service in Essex since 2003. Mary has chaired Essex CJB from 2006-09.



**Roger Baker**  
Chief Constable of Essex Police since 2005, awarded the Queen's Police Medal in 2008. Roger is Chair of Essex CJB from April 2009.



**Ken Caley**  
Chief Crown Prosecutor Essex since 2007, moving from Suffolk. Ken becomes Deputy Chair of CJB from April 2009.



**Rob Davis**  
Governor of Chelmsford Prison & Young Offenders' Inst. Rob's 2007 appointment as Governor followed 23 years in the prison service.



**Tanya Gillett**  
Head of the Youth Offending Service for Essex since 1999. Tanya also represents Thurrock and Southend Youth Offending Services on Essex CJB.



**Mike Littlewood, OBE**  
Area Director for HMCS in Essex, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. Mike moved to Chelmsford in 1993 and chaired Essex CJB from 2003 - 2006.



**Simon Mason**  
Represents the Legal Services Commission on Essex CJB. The Legal Services Commission looks after legal aid to ensure access to justice.

**Questions and Information**  
If you have any questions for members of Essex Criminal Justice Board, you can put these to them at:

[essexcjb@btconnect.com](mailto:essexcjb@btconnect.com)

You can also find out more about the work of the Essex Criminal Justice Board at:

[www.cjsonline.gov.uk/essex](http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/essex)

Contributions or suggestions for *Essex Justice Matters* can be sent to:

[Valerie Goodchild](mailto:Valerie Goodchild)