

Views sought on engaging communities Green Paper

A series of new measures were announced today (April 29) by ministers as part of the *Engaging Communities in Criminal Justice* Green Paper, which aims to give communities more say in the way justice is delivered in their neighbourhoods.

The paper names 30 pathfinder areas (including 10 areas in London) that will pilot some or all of the proposed measures, which include prosecutors using a 'Community Prosecutor' approach (read more here: [Community Prosecutor](#)), extending the use of Community Impact Statements and extending the use of Citizens' Panels.

These 30 areas are taken from the 60 Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Pioneer Areas announced in October 2008 following the Casey Review. In London these are Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Haringey, Islington, Barking and Dagenham, Lambeth, Waltham Forest, Greenwich and Brent.

In London, the community prosecutor approach will be adopted by the Crown Prosecution Service from June this year and the government is proposing to establish citizens panels across all 60 Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Pioneer Areas by the end of 2009.

The Government is seeking comments on the ideas proposed in the paper. These aim to make the police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), courts, judiciary, prisons and probation service and youth justice services more connected and responsive to the communities they represent. You can view the Green Paper and comment via [this link](#).

On the morning the Green Paper was launched, Justice Minister Jack Straw visited Youth House, a detached youth project that is providing important support to young people in the Newham's Canning Town community. The

equivalent of more than £35,000 of Community Payback (community service) hours has been spent on refurbishing Youth House after it was nominated for this work by the community. The nomination came as part of the Community Justice pilot in Newham, which is being coordinated by the London Criminal Justice Board (CJB).

Youth House Project Manager Lynne Steer said: "I would like to think that by seeing the difference we are making, other communities will sit up and believe they can do the same at grass roots level. We really appreciated being listened to by someone who has the power to change things on a national level and hope he has gone away having learnt something new." <needs changing this!>

Andrew Morley, Chief Executive of the London CJB, said of the Green Paper: "We welcome this document and urge colleagues and the wider public to respond to this consultation. Cutting crime and bringing offenders to justice are top priorities for local communities. We recognise through our own community engagement strategy that giving local people more say in the justice system is key to improving public confidence in the way crime is tackled and justice delivered."

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More information:

- [Engaging Communities in Criminal Justice Green Paper](#)
- [Ministry of Justice new release](#)
- [CPS press release](#)
- Work on Youth House by offenders and the [Community Payback](#) team in Newham began in December 2007 and continued almost every weekend for a little under a year. The project was the largest single project undertaken by the team and consisted of major internal refurbishment, clearing the garden and redecorating of the exterior of the building. An average of 50 offenders each weekend completed 5,830 hours by the end of November 2008 with a value (at national minimum wage) of £35,155 to Youth House.
- The [Community Justice](#) project in London Borough of Newham began in July 2007 and currently enjoys high visibility within the Borough as a result of excellent partnership working with the statutory, corporate and third

sectors. The Community Justice Court sits on Fridays at Stratford Magistrates' court.

For further information on the issues discussed in this briefing please contact London CJB Senior Communications Officer Sarah Chan by phoning: 020 7796 8038 or by email: sarah.chan@cps.gsi.gov.uk.