



Summer 2008

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Merseyside Top for Bringing Offenders to Justice

Since 2002 Merseyside has delivered the largest increase in offences brought to justice compared to other similar metropolitan areas*.

This means in the last year **45,822** offences resulted in the offender being convicted by the courts, formally cautioned or receiving a penalty notice for disorder. This was **1,627** more than the target set for Merseyside by central government.

Assistant Chief Constable Helen King, a member of Merseyside Criminal Justice Board said the results reflect the good work of Merseyside criminal justice agencies and the support provided by the public. In the last 2 years the area has seen the largest fall in crime in the country and we have also seen the largest increase in offences brought to justice compared to similar areas. This is a huge achievement. It is a tribute to the determination of victims and witnesses to bring offenders to justice and to the hard work and professionalism of all those who work in the criminal justice system, including the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Her Majesty's Court Services, Youth Offending Services and Probation.

Paul Whittaker, Chief Crown Prosecutor for Merseyside and member of Merseyside Criminal Justice Board said, 'The success represents very effective joint working by police and prosecutors in bringing more offenders to justice on behalf of our communities in Merseyside'.

* Most similar areas are Cleveland, Northumbria, Greater Manchester, West Midlands and West Yorkshire.

The Justice Awards 2008 Nominate a Colleague for a Justice Award '08

Baroness Scotland Attorney General, set up the National Justice Awards initiative in 2004. Since then the awards have grown steadily in strength and in recognition among those at the front line in the Criminal Justice System. Those who go the 'extra mile' in their work with victims, witnesses, defendants and offenders are eligible to be nominated.

The Major Incident Team and Witness Assessment Unit from Merseyside Police won a National Justice Award last year for its 'Outstanding Achievement in Caring for Witnesses'.

You have until Monday 4th August to nominate individuals or teams, the categories are:

The individual award categories are:

- Outstanding achievement in caring for victims
- Outstanding achievement in caring for witnesses
- Outstanding contribution to tackling youth crime
- Outstanding contribution to working with offenders
- Outstanding contribution to engaging communities
- Outstanding commitment to diversity
- Long service award for continued commitment and dedication
- Volunteer of the year award

The team categories are:

- Outstanding achievement in caring for victims
- Outstanding achievement in caring for witnesses
- Outstanding contribution to tackling youth crime
- Outstanding contribution to working with offenders
- Outstanding contribution to engaging local communities
- Outstanding commitment to diversity
- Partnership of the year: best example of joint working across the CJS



Log on to the Justice Awards website where information about the awards and more details on how to nominate can be found:

<http://justiceawards.cjsonline.gov.uk/online-nomination/>

Potential features and ideas are welcome

Contact the **Editor, Carol Davenport**
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In the Chair.

**Geoffrey Appleton, Head of Operations (Crime)
Her Majesty's Court Service**

Geoffrey Appleton recently took time out to talk to Carol Davenport about his role as Head of Operations (Crime) for Her Majesty's Court Service, particularly around the work of enforcement and retrieving 'ill-gotten gains' from criminals.



Geoffrey Appleton

What are your main areas of responsibility as Head of Operations (Crime)?

I am responsible for all of the criminal courts, enforcement centres, crown and magistrates' courts across Merseyside and Cheshire. I also lead on diversity and on 'Proceeds of Crime' in the region. I chair a Regional Strategy Group on proceeds of crime which consists of representatives from all of the criminal justice agencies on Merseyside (Police, Probation, Courts, Crown Prosecution) and I chair the Enforcement Sub-Groups for both Cheshire and Merseyside Criminal Justice Boards.

What do you mean by Proceeds of Crime (POC)?

This is basically where the Courts take significant sums of money from criminals whose lifestyles have been funded by crime. As a region, we in Merseyside are seen as a centre of excellence through our work around proceeds of crime. Other Police forces including the Metropolitan Police have been to see our POC teams to learn how we deliver success. In 2007/8, through excellent joint working with Police and Crown Prosecution, we collected £3.5 million from criminals, seizing their assets. Criminals are forced to sell properties in some cases. If they don't pay they face further additional, lengthy custodial sentences.

You are Responsible for Enforcement. What does Enforcement Involve?

In addition to POC, there are three other strands to enforcement:

- **Breach of Community Sentences**
- **Fines**
- **Fail to Appear Warrants**

Breach of Community Sentences

At court if an offender is given a community sentence such as carrying out unpaid work as an alternative to a custodial sentence, and the offender subsequently 'breaches' or fails to carry out the community sentence, then our Civilian Enforcement Officers (CEOs) will bring the offender back to court. We have targets to meet which means that our CEOs track those offenders down, bring them back to court and they are dealt with within 35 days of them breaching their sentence.

Fines

If a fine is imposed on an offender at court then the offender has a duty to pay the fine. Last year, we collected £5.9 million in fines.

Unfortunately, 70% of fines imposed at court require some type of enforcement further down the line to make sure that the fine is paid. No sum is too small to collect and we regularly use various means to collect fines including our Civilian Enforcement Officers and bailiffs.

We also hold 'fine surgeries' and we plan joint operations with the Police which are very successful. Offenders have the opportunity to pay fines using the most easy methods of payment - for example cash, credit/debit card, Paypoint cards, but if they try to avoid payment then we do call in bailiffs or our Civilian Enforcement Officers to recover monies due. We do take a very tough line if we have to but our efforts are directed to enabling people to pay in the first instance.

Fail to Appear Warrants

When an offender has been told to appear in court on a specific date, but fails to turn up, then a warrant is issued for their arrest. HMCS enforce warrants for low level offences i.e. drunk and disorderly or minor theft. Warrants for more serious offences are dealt with by the Police.

What does Enforcement Deliver for the Public of Merseyside?

We aim to increase public confidence in the criminal justice system. When members of the public see their neighbours benefiting from a lifestyle funded by crime and they then see those same people being sentenced, we know what we do is having an impact.

In terms of fines, the message that I would like to convey is that there is no hiding place for those who owe money or don't comply with court orders. Some offenders may see a fine as an easy option but we will use whatever means we have at our disposal to recover what is due to the Courts.

Background

Geoffrey has worked for HMCS for 30 years and began his career as a Legal Advisor, he has a masters in Criminology. Following this he spent ten years in Human Resources where he led nationally on training for magistrates. Geoffrey has in the past been a member of the board of visitors for HMP Liverpool, a non-executive director in the NHS and also president of the Athenaeum (a private members' club founded in 1797).

Just before this newsletter was printed Geoffrey was appointed Acting Area Director for Her Majesty's Courts Service, Cheshire and Merseyside.

Youth Court Relocates & Facilities Improve for Jurors, Victims and Witnesses



(from left to right) Shaun McNally, C.B.E., HMCS Area Director; The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Leveson, Senior Presiding Judge; Maria Eagle, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State; His Honour Judge Globe, Q.C., The Hon Recorder of Liverpool; and Robert Owen, J.P., Chairman of the Youth Panel.

Senior Presiding Judge Lord Justice Leveson, in the presence of the Courts Minister Maria Eagle, recently unveiled the newly relocated Youth Court at the Queen Elizabeth II Law Courts in Liverpool.

The £8.5m improvements include:

- Separate waiting areas for prosecution and defence witnesses
- A discrete entrance which enables witnesses to enter the building free from the fear of intimidation
- Two extra Crown courtrooms
- An enlarged and refurbished jury assembly area

This new location improves access at the new Youth Court, particularly for disabled users. There is a much larger waiting area with natural daylight and consultation rooms which have more privacy than before. The number of Youth Court rooms has increased from three to four and these house a variety of styles to reflect the wide range of cases being heard.

Senior Presiding Judge, Lord Justice Leveson said:

“The development of the Queen Elizabeth II Law Courts represents the next phase of the farsighted programme involving the development of all court facilities on Merseyside: It is both welcome and timely.

For the Crown Court, it increases capacity and provides necessary separation between prosecution and defence witnesses. It also creates a modern Youth Court which is long overdue.”

The improvement works began at the Queen Elizabeth II Courts in December 2006 and were completed April 2008.

The improved facilities use the space previously occupied by the civil and family courts and the county court office, which are now located in their own building in the Tithebarn Street, Liverpool.

Simple, Speedy, Summary Coming to Youth Courts

Merseyside criminal justice agencies have started work to ensure that all cases appearing in the youth courts are dealt with more efficiently.

Simple, speedy, summary justice (known as CJSSS) was developed in 2006 to tackle inefficiencies in the criminal justice system and was rolled out in all magistrates' courts in 2007. The focus is now shifting to the youth courts and the aim is to implement CJSSS into every youth court by the end of 2008.

CJSSS in the youth courts is aiming to achieve:

- The majority of guilty pleas at first hearing to be completed at that first hearing
- Average time from charge to completion for all cases is 6 weeks
- The majority of contested cases i.e. those where there has been a not guilty plea at first hearing - to be dealt with within 2 hearings
- The majority of trials to commence within 6 weeks of first hearing

Local Implementation Teams from Liverpool, Wirral, Sefton and Knowsley/St Helens which include local Youth Offender Managers, have started work on implementation plans in preparation for rollout in Merseyside in November 2008.

Following the success of CJSSS in the magistrates' courts, this initiative is being project managed by Anne Reilly on behalf of Merseyside Criminal Justice Board. Assistant Chief Constable Helen King continues as senior responsible officer.

More news about CJSSS in the youth courts to follow in the next edition.

Police and Courts Target Criminals at Liverpool JLA

Criminals wanted on warrant who tried to enter or leave the country were recently targeted by Merseyside Police and Her Majesty's Courts Service during a joint operation at Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

During the Operation:

- 18 arrests were made
- Fines totalling £1,100 were collected
- 384 people were stopped and checked against the Police National Computer and Her Majesty's Courts Database.

Police Officers worked alongside Court Enforcement Officers to recover unpaid fines and identify those who had failed to appear in court. The Operation which brought added security to the airport and reassurance to the public during the approach to the busy summer period, turned out a number of arrests including robbery, drug importation and public order.

Merseyside Criminal Justice agencies sent out a clear message to the criminal fraternity which said that they could either pay up or risk losing their holiday.



'Police Officers vigilant at Liverpool John Lennon Airport'



**Governor of
HMP Liverpool
Awarded OBE**

Alan Brown, Governor of her Majesty's Prison Liverpool and member of Merseyside Criminal Justice Board has been made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queens Birthday Honours list.

Alan commented:

'I am hugely proud to have been recognised in this way for doing a job which I have found rewarding and interesting throughout my career.'

Alan is originally from Kirkcaldy in Scotland joined the Prison Service in 1972 as a 21 year old. During his 37 years service he has served in 10 different prisons and young offender institutes in England, including Wormwood Scrubs.

Alan was appointed Governor at HMP Liverpool in 2005, where he is responsible for the care of 1,400 prisoners and 750 directly employed staff. His role is one of the largest managerial jobs in the prison service. Alan is known as a 'moderniser' who aims to make living conditions better for prisoners in his care and to improve working conditions for his staff.

Mythbuster Quiz Ipod Winners

10,500 employees from all of the Merseyside criminal justice agencies were given a copy of the Mythbuster booklet during May 2008.

Winners of the ipods were:

- **HMP Liverpool**, Sarah Bentley, Business Management & Performance Unit.
- **HMCS**, Jackie Spencer, St Helens Magistrates' Court.
- **Merseyside Police**, Rachael Fidler, Operational Support, Roads Policing Unit.
- **Crown Prosecution Service**, Lynn Clark, Associate Prosecutor.

When Lynn heard that she had won she said 'I was delighted to win this ipod it now means I can use it when I go running instead of listening to my sons!'



Lynn Clark with Paul Whittaker, Chief Crown Prosecutor.



What's On

**Merseyside Justice Awards
Nominations Event.**

5th September 2008,
Anglican Cathedral.

**National Victim & Witness
Conference.**

Coming to Merseyside,
Autumn 2008.



**Inside Justice Week
18th - 25th October 2008.**

The Merseyside Criminal Justice System opens its doors to the public, the theme this year is 'Justice For All'.

Check out www.insidejustice.cjsonline.gov.uk for more information.