



Kate Carty shows Graham Allen MP and Lord Falconer Nottingham's proposal

## nb. - Taking special note of crime and justice in Nottinghamshire

**Welcome** to the first edition of **nb.** - Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board's new bi-monthly e-magazine.

**nb.** is written for and by people working with or within the county's criminal justice system. **nb.** will inform you of criminal justice news from across Nottinghamshire.

If you have ideas or views you would like to share, then please contact David Marley, Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board Communications Manager, on 0115 955 8135 or email: david.marley@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk

## Community Justice for Nottingham

**Innovative community justice courts, which seek to tackle anti-social behaviour and quality of life crimes, will be coming to Nottingham after the Government gave the go-ahead for Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board to pilot two city-based projects.**

Lord Falconer, Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor, announced that Nottingham, along with nine other locations, will be taking part in the Government's next phase of community justice in England and Wales. The announcement followed the success of pilots in Liverpool and Salford.

Lord Falconer said he hoped the new style of local justice would become an essential element of the law and order system.

He said: "I believe that community justice as a concept and in practice is an essential part of the future of the criminal justice system.

"Community justice aims to strengthen links between the courts, the criminal justice system and the local community so that local people's confidence in the work of the courts and the wider criminal justice system increases."

Two pilot projects covering Aspley and St Ann's will be created by mid-2007. One court will be based at an existing court centre and one will operate within the community. The courts will bring together criminal justice agencies, like the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation and Her Majesty's Courts Service, along with the community to identify concerns that blight the lives of local people.

Ms Kate Carty, Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board representative leading the community justice project, said: "The Board is delighted with the public's enthusiasm for the creation of community justice courts in Nottingham."

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## news in brief.

### How mini do you want your moto?



Chief Superintendent Richard Johnson, Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle, Councillor John Clarke, Kate Carty & Councillor Jon Collins.

**Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board joined forces with Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council to launch a new campaign this Christmas to warn people of the dangers of mini-motos. Posters were displayed across the county informing people that mini-motos caught being ridden on roads and pavements could be seized and crushed.**



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from the  
front  
page

Local people, voluntary organisations, criminal justice employees, serving prisoners and residents, participated in a two-month public consultation during August and September this year. The response was overwhelming – with over 83% of contributors feeling the creation of the new courts in Nottingham was a good idea.

“In a nutshell, local people will have many opportunities to get involved.”

Ms Carty continues: “The project will be a local response to the Government’s plans to expand the community justice programme to other areas of England and Wales. By working closely with a range of criminal justice agencies and other partners we will examine the long-term potential and sustainability for community justice in Nottingham. Nottingham’s project will seek to develop links with existing crime reduction initiatives, community empowerment programmes and social inclusion projects. In a nutshell, local people will have many opportunities to get involved.”

Contributors to the Board’s public community consultation identified a number of buildings as possible locations for the community-based court. The project team is currently risk-assessing the suitability of each nominated building against a set of criteria issued by the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

Community justice will support the wider priorities and objectives of the Local Area Agreement, which is being delivered by the Local Strategic Partnership, One Nottingham. The community justice project in Nottingham is led by Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board and is supported by a range of other organisations including, Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership, Nottingham City Council and the Nottingham Community Network.



The Community Justice project team meet Graham Allen MP & Lord Falconer in Aspley

## Your Questions Answered

### Q. Why were St Ann’s and Aspley chosen?

A. St Ann’s and Aspley were chosen as the best places to kick-start community justice in Nottingham, following an analysis of data collected by Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership – and also because of the range of community activities already established in the local communities.

### Q. What types of crimes will the new courts deal with?

A. Community justice courts will deal with “quality of life” crimes which blight local areas, such as vandalism, graffiti and offences associated with anti-social behaviour.

### Q. How much will the new courts cost?

A. The Board is working with its partners to establish the courts in the most efficient and effective way possible. The project team are preparing funding bids to the Department of Constitutional Affairs and the Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership.

### Q. How will you know if confidence has increased?

A. To establish an understanding of the current levels of community satisfaction in the criminal justice system, the project team will arrange independent opinion polls to be carried out in Aspley, St Ann’s and a non-participating ward in Nottingham.

For more information about community justice please contact Vanessa Law at Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board on 0115 955 8135.

## Community Justice

### What is it & how will it work in Nottingham?

**Community justice courts focus on the root causes of offending. The courts challenge crime by:**

- Adopting a problem-solving approach to addressing specific crimes;
- Empowering local people to become more involved in the delivery of justice;
- Enabling local people to identify the criminal or anti-social activities that cause them greatest concern; and
- Making the court and other criminal justice agencies more responsive to the concerns of the local community.

The concept of community justice was born in Red Hook, a tough neighbourhood in Brooklyn, New York. It was set-up to focus on local crime problems. The problem-solving approach taken in Red Hook, presided over by a single judge, has been credited with a dramatic reduction in re-offending rates.

In early October 2006 the Criminal Justice Board presented Nottingham’s project submission to Lord Falconer. Since then Board members and a small project team have been working to develop the next stages in the life of the initiative. This has included the creation of a Strategic Project Board, which is supported by three specialist sub-groups that have responsibility for operations, communications and community engagement.

## Improved Performance in Nottinghamshire's Justice System

Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board has welcomed Government figures showing improved performance in the county's criminal justice system.

Local performance figures for Nottinghamshire on delivery against key Government criminal justice targets are published quarterly. Figures to June 2006 show increased public confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to bring offenders to justice – from 28% when the Criminal Justice Board was set up in April 2003 to its current level of 39%.

Mr Steve Green, Chair of the Board, said: "The agencies who make up our Board are working effectively together to ensure that the system is being rebalanced in favour of the law-abiding majority.

I'm delighted that these figures show that progress is being made, but we won't be resting on our laurels. Although public confidence is increasing and more offences are being brought to justice we are always striving to make further improvements."

"we are always striving to make further improvements."



In Nottinghamshire the quarterly figures show:

- **Over 5,000 additional offences were brought to justice in the year ending June 2006, rising from 24,314 in March 2002 to 29,500 in June 2006;**
- **A better service for victims and witnesses of crime, with a reduction in the rate of ineffective trials in the Crown Court to 5.8% against a national target of 14%; and**
- **Increased payment rate of fines issued by magistrates' courts – making Nottinghamshire one of the best performing areas in the country.**

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD



Criminal Justice System: working together for the public

## news in brief.

### Witness Care Open Evening

As part of Inside Justice Week, a city-based Witness Care Unit opened its doors to local charities. The Unit, based at King Edward Court, is one of two operating in the county with a remit to provide better care and support for victims and witnesses. Chief Crown Prosecutor Ms Kate Carty and Victim Support Chairman Mr Robin Towle provided information on the Unit's achievements. Witness care officers have provided support to victims and witnesses in over 5,000 trials since the Unit was created in March 2005.

For more information on the Witness Care Units please contact Ella Hendy at the Crown Prosecution Service on 0115 852 3588.



## Justice Champions praised at National Crime Awards

**A Nottinghamshire charity which helps young people to give evidence at court has won a national award at this year's Justice Awards.**

Nottinghamshire's Young Witness Service (YMS) scooped the team category of the "Outstanding Achievement in Caring for Witnesses" award. The Service's workload has tripled in two years with nearly 200 young witnesses receiving their support in the last year. Two staff and 30 volunteers visit young witnesses at home and show them the court before they give evidence and that support continues through and after trial.

Eleanor Dewer, Young Witness Service Manager for Victim Support, said: "I am delighted that the Young Witness Service has won this prestigious award."

A police officer who helped secure a conviction in a high profile murder case with the county's first use of anonymous evidence and a Probation Area team working with offenders to secure employment, training and education were runners-up in two other categories.



Eleanor Dewer

Detective Sergeant Jan Rusdale of Nottinghamshire Police reached the final of the "Outstanding Achievement in Caring for Witnesses" individual category and Nottinghamshire Probation Area's Access Team was a runner-up in the "Outstanding Contribution to Working with Offenders" award.

Mr Steve Green, Chair of Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board, said: "I'm delighted the Young Witness Service has won a national award. If ever there was an encouragement for people to come forward as witnesses, this is it. I am also very pleased that DS Rusdale and the Access Team reached the final of their categories. These hidden heroes represent all the good work within the criminal justice system."

# Domestic Violence

## support increases after Government Assessment

**The proportion of perpetrators pleading guilty to domestic violence offences in Nottingham has increased following the creation of specialist courts, according to Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board.**

Latest figures show in the first three full months of the specialist domestic violence courts (June to August 2006) the proportion of defendants pleading guilty to domestic violence offences rose to 52.1%, compared to 43.8% during the same period of 2005.

The increase in performance follows a positive assessment by the Government's Specialist Domestic Violence Programme Panel – comprising Government Office East Midlands and the Local Government Association – which stated that Nottingham's domestic violence courts were "fit for purpose."

The courts, held at Nottingham Magistrates' Court on Wednesday mornings each week, promote a co-ordinated approach to tackling domestic violence. All the criminal justice agencies are working together with voluntary specialist support services and strategic partners, such as Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership, to provide better services for victims and more effective treatment for offenders.

Agencies work together to identify, track and risk assess domestic violence cases and better share information so that more offenders are brought to justice, victims are protected, and further violence is prevented. Targeted victims are supported throughout their case by an accredited Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA), who offers victims one point of contact during and after their case. In Nottingham this service is provided by the Women's Aid Advice Centre.

**"Domestic violence accounts for 16% of all violent crime and has more repeat victims than any other crime."**

Jane Lewis, Chair of Nottingham's specialist domestic violence court steering group, said: "In Nottingham, all of the domestic violence court project partners are determined to provide a first-class service

to victims so that many more people will have confidence to report what is a devastating crime."

**For a copy of Nottingham's Specialist Domestic Violence Court leaflet please call 0115 955 8135**



**Some achievements of the new domestic violence courts in Nottingham include:**

- The proportion of offenders being brought to justice, including those convicted after trial and defendants entering guilty pleas, has increased to 56.9% (over the period June to August 2006), compared to 52.6% during the same months of 2005;
- Following the assessment by the national Specialist Domestic Violence Programme Panel additional training and support will be available for staff working in the specialist domestic violence courts; and
- A rise in the number of perpetrators going through the Probation Service's Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP), which aims to reduce the risk of violent crime and abusive behaviour towards women by their partners by helping offenders change their attitudes.

## Volunteering for Nottinghamshire

One of the best ways people can make a contribution to the criminal justice system is by **becoming a special constable**. The Special Constabulary is the most visible way to providing valuable support to full-time officers patrolling the streets of Nottinghamshire.

**Making a Difference – Louise Harper.** In her day job Louise Harper has been a secretary for the South Nottinghamshire Division Command

Team for almost ten years. Based at Carlton Police Station, she deals with everything you'd expect a secretary to be faced with, and a little bit more. However, in her other life Louise has been working as a special constable for Nottinghamshire Police for the last seven years, operating in the City Centre, St Ann's, Carlton, West Bridgford and Bingham. This year she won the force's Special Constable of the Year award. Her

time working as a special constable has persuaded her that what she really wants to do is become a full-time officer. Having completed all the recruitment stages, Louise is now due to start her official police training early next year.

**For more information about joining the Special Constabulary contact Derek Gazzard on 01623 420 999.**

## Inside Justice Week 2006

Nottinghamshire's criminal justice agencies opened their doors to give the public a unique glimpse behind the criminal justice system during the Government's annual Inside Justice Week (18 – 25 November 2006).

On Thursday 23 November Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board held an open session at the Nottingham Ice Arena for members of the public, community groups and voluntary organisations. Board members answered questions about crime and justice in the county. Over 100 people attended the event.

Representatives from criminal justice agencies provided information about volunteering opportunities including, how to become a magistrate and a special constable.

Mr Steve Green, Chair of Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board, said: "Opening up the Local Criminal Justice Board during Inside Justice Week was an excellent way to enable people, who may have never come into contact with the justice system, to look behind the scenes, ask questions and find out more about the community justice courts project."



Chief Probation Officer Jane Geraghty answers questions

## news in brief.

### Persistent Young Offenders Brought to Justice Quicker

**Latest figures issued by Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board show the average time from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders in the county has fallen by 16 days between May and June 2006. The average number of days to process offenders has dropped from 70 days during May to 54 days in June 2006. The Government target is 71 days.**

### New Court Director

**Mr Mark Swales has been appointed as Area Director for Her Majesty's Courts Service. Mark, who replaces Mr Alan Phillips, has responsibility for the management of courts in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Mark will also serve as a member of Nottinghamshire's Criminal Justice Board.**



## County's defence lawyers question Board

Solicitors and barristers from Nottinghamshire's criminal defence community attended a briefing session with members of the Criminal Justice Board on Friday 8 December.

The event, which took place at Nottingham Magistrates' Court, was part of the Board's commitment to engage with criminal defence practitioners. Those attending the event listened to presentations about charging, community justice courts and the secure email project. Board members answered questions about some of the legal changes taking place in the criminal justice system.

Mr Steve Green, Chair of the Board, said: "The Board is particularly eager to listen to the views and thoughts of Nottinghamshire's criminal defence because of the important contribution they make to the smooth and effective running of the criminal justice system."

The event was supported by the Legal Services Commission.



## Justice Hero – Sue Matthews

A new specialist sexual offending team has been created at Nottinghamshire Crown Prosecution Service. The team, believed to be the first of its kind in the CPS, has been established after months of planning by one of the county's most experienced prosecutors.

Sue Matthews, a Senior Crown Prosecutor with over 17 years experience in the criminal justice system, leads the "Public Protection Team" which coordinates prosecutions of child abuse, vulnerable adult abuse, rape, internet abuse, child abduction and infanticide cases.

Dedicated lawyers from four CPS teams located throughout the county manage sexual offending cases. Sue, who is a higher court advocate, believes that because of the complexity of serious sexual offending a specialist team was the most effective way to review such cases.

Prosecutors working in the team have to complete a training programme and are encouraged to work closely with police investigators. Sue said: "The purpose is to ensure these complex cases are progressed sensitively, efficiently and effectively. We're not just prosecuting cases, we're trying to protect the public with the work we do."

Sue thinks that the secret of efficient and effective prosecutions in this area is down to being well organised. She says: "Being methodical and understanding every issue that might come up at trial from the point of charge is crucial. We must also be prepared to use techniques that we do not often use, such as conducting reluctant witness hearings in appropriate circumstances. The ultimate aim is to increase the conviction rate in this difficult area while ensuring a fair trial, establish effective multi-agency relationships, protect the public and increase confidence in the work we do."

Sue recently acted as junior counsel in the case of three Mansfield men, who lured young schoolgirls to their terraced house and subjected them to sexual assaults. They encouraged the girls to experiment with alcohol and drugs. Ultimately the girls were subjected to sexual assaults. The case against the men was proven at court and the men received sentences ranging from community orders to lengthy periods in custody.



Prosecutor Sue Matthews talks to SAGA radio about her work

"We're trying to protect the public with the work we do."

For more information about the Public Protection Team please contact Sue at CPS Nottinghamshire on 0115 852 3300.

## Working for You

Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board is made up of chief officers from the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Prisons, Her Majesty's Courts Service, Probation and Youth Offending Teams. The Board, created in April 2003, is one of 42 throughout England and Wales.

Agencies work together to increase the number of offences brought to justice and increase confidence in the criminal justice system by making it more responsive to victims and witness needs.

The Board's chair is Mr Steve Green, Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Police.

## Chief Officers on the Board



Steve Green,  
Chief Constable,  
Nottinghamshire Police



Kate Carty,  
Chief Crown Prosecutor,  
Crown Prosecution Service



Mark Swales,  
Area Director, HM Courts Service



Jane Geraghty,  
Chief Probation Officer,  
Nottinghamshire Probation Service



Ken Beaumont,  
Head of Service, Nottingham City  
Youth Offending Team



Jill Holbert,  
Head of Service, Nottinghamshire  
Youth Offending Team



Tom Wheatley,  
Governor, HM Prison Nottingham



Chris Wade,  
Chief Executive, Victim Support



Elaine Annable,  
Criminal Defence Service  
Manager,  
Legal Services Commission

For more information about the Board's work please call Andrea Goodman, Board Coordinator, on 0115 955 8135.