

Board Launch Charity Month Of Action

One thousand golden balloons were released into the sky at Nottingham Castle last month to mark the launch of a thirty-day fundraising campaign to raise money for a Nottinghamshire-based charity.

Every day during the month of June, Victim Support Nottinghamshire put on at least one charity fundraising event across the county. Fundraising activities included a golf competition and a fire walking event.

Kate Carty, chair of Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board, had the honour of starting Victim Support's latest fundraising drive. Kate says: **"The Board and Victim Support have always had a very good relationship over the years and continue to work side-by-side to support the needs of victims and witnesses. I am delighted to support the charity's fundraising."**



CJSSS is Coming to Nottinghamshire

Simple, Speedy, Summary Justice (CJSSS), which strives to make court processes simpler and encourages greater inter-agency working, is coming to Nottinghamshire.

Last year the Government published *Delivering Simple Speedy Summary Justice*, which set out plans to improve the speed and effectiveness of the magistrates' courts system. This followed cross-agency reviews of Crown and magistrates' courts, which found that criminal cases were taking too long, and there were too many hearings before a case reached a conclusion.

"The aim is for criminal justice agencies to work together to provide a better service"

The review of the magistrates' courts found it was taking, on average, five hearings for simple trial cases; up to 190 days for cases to be disposed; and it was taking too many hearings before a defendant pleaded guilty or the prosecution discontinued a case.

Mark Swales, Criminal Justice Board member responsible for CJSSS, says: "The aim is for criminal justice agencies to work together to provide a better service, which is focused on reducing crime and increasing confidence in the criminal justice system."

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- Taking special note of crime and justice in Nottinghamshire

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

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CJSSS aims to deliver:

- A reduction in the number of hearings in most cases, from the current average of five to an expectation of one (for guilty plea cases) and two (for contested cases); and
- A reduction in the time from charge to disposal for simple cases – to between one day to six weeks, as opposed to the current system which averages 21 plus weeks.

This will be done by ensuring:

- Improved preparation from arrest to first hearing (whilst crucially ensuring that pre-court preparation is proportionate to the matter at issue);
- Defence are prepared and ready for the first hearing;
- A plea is entered at first hearing, with a guilty plea being sentenced at that hearing wherever possible, or in the event of a not guilty plea, trials are set within six to ten weeks; and
- A commitment to ensure that cases are progressed out of court between first hearing and trial – to ensure that trials are ready to go ahead on time.



Mark Swales (pictured left) continues:

"The success of the pilots was achieved by better, proportionate preparation from the point of charge; improved prosecution and defence preparedness for the first hearing; robust judicial management; and strong case management

for cases that needed to go to trial. Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board hopes to build on these successes."

In Nottinghamshire two implementation teams have been created - one for the north of the county, and one for the south. Representation on the teams includes, Her Majesty's Court Service, The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), police, witness care and the defence.

The project will go live in the north of the county on 1 August 2007 and on 10 December 2007 in the south. **For more information on the project please contact Wendy Storer, CJSSS programme manager, at Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board on 0115 955 8135.**

The Government decided to test the CJSSS project and its new working arrangements at four magistrates' courts - Coventry, Camberwell, Thames and West Cumbria. The new working arrangements in the pilot areas resulted in significant improvements, including

- A 24 per cent improvement in the overall plea rate at first hearing;
- A 30 per cent increase in the level of guilty pleas at first hearing;
- A 10 per cent increase in guilty plea cases being sentenced that day;
- Overall timeliness was improved (e.g. from first hearing to trial has fallen from an average of 110 days to 51 days across the four sites); and
- There has been a massive reduction in the number of pre-trial reviews and a 70 per cent reduction in the number of cases adjourned at first hearing for some form of interim hearing.

"Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board hopes to build on these successes"

There are a number of benefits for individual criminal justice agencies, such as:

1) Police

- More cases resolved at first hearing means that police officers do not attend court as often and do not attend unnecessarily. This means that police officers can concentrate resources on more serious cases.
- Improved timeliness and speedy resolution of cases means that police officers can get back to preventing and dealing with crime.

2) Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

- More investment by prosecutors at the front end of the process has substantially reduced unnecessary court appearances, reduced the administrative time in handling cases and enabled the issues of contested cases to be better clarified earlier in the process.
- The accumulated effect has been to create the capacity to reduce the backlog of trial cases that had previously built up.

3) Her Majesty's Court Service

- More effective preparation on behalf of the prosecution and the defence has resulted in significantly improved timeliness and allows the judiciary to take a more robust stance on case management.
- Increased capacity, as a result of less ineffective hearings and less adjournments, means cases can be listed more quickly and the backlog of cases can be reduced.

4) The Probation Service

- Can capitalise on the increased number of guilty pleas by providing increased numbers of oral or fast delivery reports – this can speed up the system and allow resources to be used more effectively.

5) The Legal Services Commission and the Defence

- Improving communication between defence representatives and the CPS means defence solicitors are in a better position to advise their clients and ensure a plea is entered.
- Shorter times to trial and less delays and unproductive hearings can mean earlier payment of fees and more cases resolved more quickly.

Sue In Queen's Birthday Honours List

The Queen's Birthday Honours List, published last month, contained a welcome surprise for a lawyer at Nottinghamshire Crown Prosecution Service. Sue Matthews, a senior crown prosecutor and higher court advocate, was awarded an MBE.

Sue, who was honoured for her innovative approach in supporting the prosecution of child abuse case, will travel to Buckingham Palace in the near future to collect her award.

"I was initially bewildered, amazed and shocked by the news. The first person I rang to share the announcement with was my mother. She was very proud," says Sue.

Sue established a Public Protection Team within the county's Crown Prosecution Service last year. The team strives to ensure prosecutions involving child abuse are managed effectively and efficiently. As well as criminal justice partners the team works closely with civil courts and local authorities to ensure cases are progressed appropriately and the correct solution is found. This doesn't always involve prosecution. Obtaining banning orders or maintaining accurate intelligence may be done instead.

"I have a real passion and felt compelled to pioneer this work. I feel excited as this award is a real endorsement that this has been the right approach. I have a clear vision and there is more to do; this really is a huge encouragement to carry on in this direction and see it through."

Sue also expresses her thanks to colleagues at Nottinghamshire CPS: "I couldn't do this on my own. I needed the support of the Senior Management team and the members of the Public Protection team to implement and progress my vision. I am also extremely grateful to everyone else for all those extra courts that have been covered to allow the team to have dedicated public protection sessions."



"I was bewildered, amazed and shocked by the news"



Gaining skills for a brighter future

There were plenty of proud faces at Nottinghamshire Probation's Derby Road office on 1 June, as offender learners making exceptional achievements were honoured at a 'Learner of the Year' presentation ceremony.

"I wouldn't have done this without the support of my tutor"

The event was organised by the PALS (Positive Action Learning Support) team – a partnership of Probation, Dyslexia Action and local learning establishments, as part of the National Adult Learners' Week.

Learners currently supervised by the Nottinghamshire Probation Area were presented with prizes and certificates in recognition of their efforts in gaining literacy and numeracy skills, helping to improve their employment prospects and reduce the risk of reoffending

Tutors and volunteers were invited to nominate people for one or more of six different award categories. Winners and runners up were chosen by a committee and invited to attend the event to receive their title, presented by Chair of the Nottinghamshire Probation Area Board, Christine Goldstraw, and Chair of the Nottingham Magistrates' Bench, Trevor Greaves (pictured above).

PALS programme manager Judi Apiafi said: 'People are much less likely to offend if they are engaged in employment, training or education; and poor literacy and numeracy skills are a huge barrier to gaining employment. The expertise provided by PALS helps remove those barriers, giving offenders the chance to achieve vital qualifications and significantly improve self esteem and confidence, which are also essential in acquiring and sustaining employment'

The PALS (Positive Action Learning Support) programme provides offenders supervised on court orders and prison licences with access to basic skills screening and specialist assessment, leading to basic skills and dyslexia tuition by experienced and qualified tutors.

One offender commented: "I have enjoyed coming to PALS. When I first came I was very nervous but I have gained a lot of confidence and come out of my shell. I have learned a lot and been successful in passing my Level 1 Literacy, I wouldn't have done this without the support of my tutor."

Nottingham's Community Justice Judge Named



The judge appointed to sit in Nottingham's community justice courts has been named.

District Judge Morris Cooper, along with a panel of magistrates, will oversee the running of the groundbreaking courts which hear a range of adult and youth cases from Aspley and St Ann's. Alongside his duties in court, Judge Cooper will spend time visiting neighbourhoods in Aspley and St Ann's to encourage local people to get involved in the project. By listening to the concerns of residents and working closely with local people, Judge Cooper aims to strengthen the links between criminal justice agencies and the local community – in the hope of raising public confidence in Nottinghamshire's criminal justice system.

Judge Cooper says: "I am pleased that Nottingham, along with ten other locations, has been selected

as part of the Government's next phase of community justice in England and Wales. I am looking forward to meeting local people in their neighbourhoods, so I can build a better understanding of the issues that affect their lives."

Ms Kate Carty, Chair of Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board, adds: "I am very pleased that Judge Cooper has made a commitment to engage with residents, voluntary organisations and community groups so that the courts and criminal justice agencies can develop innovative approaches to tackle anti-social behaviour and quality of life crimes, which blight the lives of local people."

Community justice, which is part of the Government's agenda to tackle anti-social behaviour and the crime associated with it, is about making life better for people living in Aspley and St Ann's. Community justice brings together the justice system and the community together, solving problems, reducing crime and building confidence.

Nottingham's innovative community justice initiative started at Nottingham Magistrates' Court in May.

The first court for St Ann's took place on Wednesday 16 May, followed by an Aspley court on Friday 18 May. Reporters from local media

covered the first courts, which led to the widespread reporting of the following cases:

- Two teenagers who were given anti-social behaviour orders in the first session of the St Ann's court. Cousins Anthony Pavier and Matthew Thornton each received two-year orders for a number of offences in St Ann's, including throwing stones at cars.
- A 40 year-old man admitted possessing a baton at the first Aspley court. Andrew Randle was spotted by a police officer riding a bike in the Broxtowe estate, on May 12, carrying a black-handled baton.

Members of the community justice project team, including justices' clerk Graham Hooper and community engagement officer Matthew Sherwood, (pictured below), are continuing to attend public meetings, giving updates about the progress of the initiative.



Judge Cooper aims to strengthen the links between criminal justice agencies and the local community

Nominations Open For Justice Awards

Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board has announced that the nomination period for the 2007 Justice Awards is now open. The awards, which started in 2004, aim to recognise the contribution made by staff and volunteers working in the county's criminal justice system.

Wendy Storer, programme manager for Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board, says: "The hard work carried out by staff within the criminal justice system often goes unnoticed. **The Justice Awards are a fantastic way to recognise exceptional achievements by staff and volunteers working in the criminal justice system.**"



Anyone who works in the criminal justice system, or volunteers within it, can nominate their colleagues or team for an award. The closing date for nominations is Friday 3 August.

Nomination forms can be completed online at www.cjsonline.gov.uk/justiceawards or call the Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice Board for more information on 0115 955 8135.

Voluntary And Public Sector Work Together To Support Domestic Violence Victims

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

Figures show that in the first year of the specialist domestic violence courts (June 2006 – May 2007) the proportion of defendants pleading guilty to domestic violence offences rose to 49.9%, compared to 46.5% for the year ending May 2006.

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 such as the Women's Aid Advice Centre and Nottinghamshire Probation Service's women safety workers to provide better services for victims and more effective treatment of offenders on the Integrated Abuse Programme.

Sharon Flannery, chair of Nottingham's specialist domestic violence project group, says: "Specialist domestic violence courts have been operating at Nottingham Magistrates' Court since May 2006. Criminal justice partners adopt a combined approach to tackling domestic violence to ensure victims receive a better service."

Some achievements of the domestic violence court in Nottingham include:

- The proportion of offenders convicted or pleading guilty has increased to 56.9% (for the year ending May 2007), compared to 53.2% for the year ending May 2006;
- A rise in the number of perpetrators going through the Probation Service's Integrated Domestic Violence 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; and
- Expansion in the number and use of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors supporting victims in Nottingham.

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. 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 Women's Aid Advice Centre.

"Criminal justice partners adopt a combined approach to tackling domestic violence to ensure victims receive a better service."

news in brief.

Weeks of Action

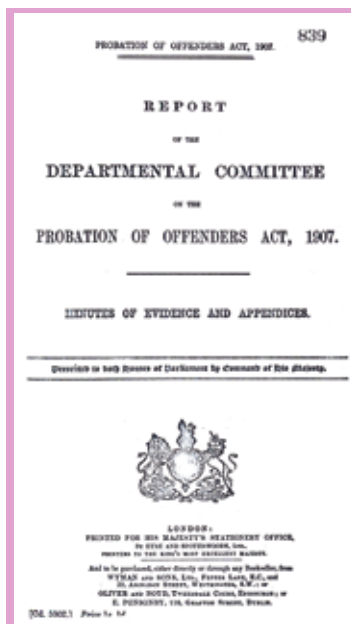
The first phase of Nottingham Crime and Drug partnerships weeks of action have now been completed. The activities were well received by the local communities and through effective partnership work significant results were achieved.

Over the course of the 8 weeks of action the following results were achieved;

- Over 9300 homes have been Smartwatered,
- 295 Arrests have been made,
- 52 Police enforcement raids executed,
- 13 ASBOs served,
- 3914 Sq Metres of graffiti removed,
- 423 Tonnes of rubbish cleared,
- Over 500 Home fire safety checks made,
- 115 fixed penalty notices issued,
- 29 vehicles including 4 mini motos seized,
- 63 assessments for drug treatment arranged,
- over 4000 TV licensing visits carried out,
- over 3500 children and young people engaged in activities,
- and 16 new Neighbourhood Watch Groups established

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you can call:

- Nottinghamshire Women's Aid Advice Centre's 24 hour helpline on 0808 800 0340;
 - Nottinghamshire Police - 999 in emergencies or 0115 967 0999 for non-emergency calls; and
 - For further information about domestic violence locally and nationally, including further help, visit the Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Forum website at www.ndvf.org.uk



Celebrating a Century of cutting crime

Nottinghamshire Probation Area continued to celebrate the service's centenary year at an event at the Galleries of Justice, Nottingham, on 27 June.

Chief Officers, Board Members and academics attended the 10th Annual Bill McWilliams memorial lecture, given this year by Professor Mike Nellis of the University of Strathclyde, on the subject of 'Probation, Managerialism and the Coming of Technocorrections'. Bill McWilliams, who died in 1997, had a prestigious career as a probation practitioner, researcher and writer. His quartet of articles on the probation service's development up to the point at which the 'punishment in the community' debate began, is now widely regarded as its definitive history of ideas.

As part of the same event, partners and the general public were invited to drop in to a probation 'marketplace' between 2 and 5pm, to meet staff and find out more about the varied work undertaken in the area. Stalls, located in the Galleries' Activity Point included accommodation, public protection and offender management as well as a book stall with probation titles.

Conditional Cautioning comes to Mansfield

Police officers in Mansfield and Ashfield now have a new tool in the fight against crime with the introduction of conditional cautions.

Coming into effect on Friday 29th June, and being implemented from Monday 2nd July, it is the first phase of the roll-out of the scheme across the whole of the county, supported by Nottinghamshire's Local Criminal Justice Board.

A conditional caution can be used in cases of offences committed by adult offenders (18+), and was initially introduced by the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

The aims of the conditional caution are:

- To bring more offences to justice by reducing delays in court
- To allow magistrates to deal with more complex and contested cases
- To give greater involvement for victims
- To give victims the chance to get compensation quickly
- To deliver an appropriate response, and not to be a 'soft option'
- To enable the more effective use of police time and resources

Conditional cautions were piloted by Lancashire Constabulary in 2004, where they were a great success, and are now being rolled out across the country.

As the name suggests, they allow offenders to be given a caution with specific conditions that must be adhered to in order to avoid prosecution. If the offender fails to comply with those conditions, they will usually be charged with the original offence.

The 'basic rules' that apply to the issuing of a conditional caution are:

- The offender must have admitted the offence under cautioned interview
- There must be sufficient evidence to charge the offender with an offence
- It must be in the public interest to issue a conditional caution
- The conditions must be proportionate, appropriate and achievable

An offender can refuse to accept a conditional caution, but if they do they immediately opt to be charged with the offence instead.

The aim is to deliver a more 'victim-focused' solution, and can include compensation for the victim without the need to go through a court process. At the moment, the only way a victim can get compensation is through prosecution (with all the related court processes) or a civil action, which places the burden on the victim.

However, the compensation does not always have to be financial; it could be something as simple as an apology from the offender.

Conditional cautions also give the criminal justice system the chance to engage with an offender at an earlier stage, with conditions potentially including attending a drug or alcohol rehabilitation programme, enabling the offender to address the underlying cause of their criminal activity.

Conditional cautions will also relieve some of the strain on the court system, dealing with lower level offences without having to go through a potentially costly

and time-consuming court process, and cut the cost of dealing with offenders.

Initial cost analysis has suggested that for each offender given a conditional caution, there is a saving to the criminal justice system of more than £300.

The introduction of conditional cautions should also increase the public's confidence in the criminal justice system by increasing victim satisfaction that offenders are being dealt with quickly, appropriately and proportionately.

Nottinghamshire Police's Assistant Chief Constable Sue Fish said: "The introduction of conditional cautioning in Mansfield and Ashfield is the fore-runner to a force-wide rollout, which should be complete by the end of the year.

"Conditional cautions will give the victims a greater involvement in the process and their views will be considered at a much earlier stage. For the first time, we will be able to influence the opportunity for the victim to receive compensation, financial or otherwise, from the offender.

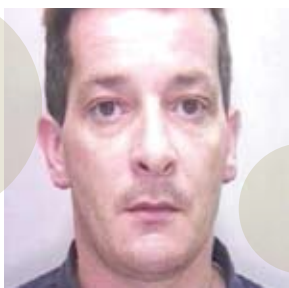
"Conditional cautions should provide quick and effective resolutions to some of the more low-level offences without having to go through the court process, and will deliver a cost saving which will benefit the public, the police and the Crown Prosecution Service."

Jane Nattrass, Prosecution Team Leader at Nottinghamshire's Crown Prosecution Service, said: "The CPS welcomes this initiative. It has the potential to deliver speedy and sensible solutions for the victims of some low-level offending."

Man bought back from Spain to face justice

Thanks to the hard work and determination of several criminal justice agencies, a Nottinghamshire man, who fled to Spain after carrying out an armed robbery, is now safely behind bars.

CPS Nottinghamshire, Nottinghamshire Police, CPS Special Crime Division (SCD), the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), prosecuting Counsel, and Spanish authorities all worked closely to track down William Jack and return him to England to face the consequences of his actions.



Jack was responsible for devising a masked raid which saw a couple held at knifepoint at their home in Mansfield in March 2005. He recruited two accomplices, brothers Colin and Richard Shooter, who pleaded guilty in March 2006 to two offences of armed robbery and were sentenced to nine years imprisonment.

After Jack failed to attend his trial in October 2006, he was convicted in his absence of the two armed robberies. An investigation into his whereabouts suggested that he had absconded to Spain, and a European Arrest Warrant was issued for his arrest.

Jack was tracked down to the town of Pila de La Horadada, Alicante. Jack, a Rod Stewart impersonator, was arrested just before he was about to perform on stage.

Nottinghamshire Crown Prosecution Service prosecutor,

Sue Matthews, said it was a very challenging case and teamwork was essential: "It is great to have the assistance of our European neighbours. International assistance is going to become increasingly important as crime becomes more global in nature".

Sue added: "This case sends out a clear message that failure to turn up at trial does not mean prosecution will be avoided. William Jack thought he could evade prosecution by absconding to Spain, but we secured a conviction in his absence and arranged for a European Arrest Warrant."

Jack is now serving a 12-year prison sentence. Sue Matthews said: "William Jack is a dangerous and violent man, who has now been brought back before the court to face the consequences of his crimes."

"This case sends out a clear message that failure to turn up at trial does not mean prosecution will be avoided."

Top Justice Ministers visit Notts Probation Area

Following the formation of the new Ministry of Justice – a government department responsible for courts, prisons, probation and constitutional affairs - top ministers have visited Nottinghamshire Probation Area to meet staff and take a look at the wide range of work going on in the area.

The former Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer, visited Mayfield Court, a sheltered housing complex in the Meadows area, to see how offenders on Unpaid Work orders had transformed the elderly residents' garden as part of the 'Community Payback' scheme. He also took the opportunity to discuss issues currently affecting the service with cross grade staff from various teams.

Minister of State The Rt Hon. David Hanson MP visited Nottinghamshire's Traffic Street office, firstly meeting with staff from the multi-agency 'Sherwood Project' team to find out more about how they work in partnership to manage Prolific and Priority offenders in Nottinghamshire, contributing to the reduction of acquisitive crime across the county.

Employer engagement and working in partnership were next on the agenda as Mr Hanson visited the Access computer workshop, to see offenders working towards vocational skills such as health and safety certificates, and to chat to staff about how the service helps people to access the vital skills needed to get back into work and away from crime.

The visit concluded with a tour of two workshops located within the office, to see offenders building garden furniture such as benches and bird tables and repairing bikes as part of their Unpaid Work orders. Items created and refurbished in the workshops are sold for charity or donated to youth groups or individuals seeking employment.



Justice Hero – Cath Rowe

As well as being part of Nottinghamshire Probation's 2006 Justice Award-winning Access Team, Research Administrator Cath Rowe is also a charity fundraising star.

Successfully completing the 2007 London Marathon in an impressive four hours and twenty minutes has enabled Cath to raise £690 for her chosen charity, the Alzheimer's Society.

Cath explained: "The whole experience was amazing, the hot weather, the fantastic support from the crowds, everything combined to make it a great experience. What makes it even more amazing is the interest and support I have had from my work colleagues and friends, and it's thanks to their generosity that I was able to raise such a fantastic amount."



"The whole experience was amazing."

"Green" Classification For Victim Support

Victim Support Nottinghamshire is the first county to be given a GREEN classification following an inspection carried out by Victim Support's National Quality Assurance Team last October.

The inspection looked at all aspects of the charity's work and evaluated them according to a 'traffic lights' grading:

- **RED** means the basic standards have not been met;
- **ORANGE** means that basic requirements are being met;
- **YELLOW** means the Area is performing beyond the basic level;
- **GREEN** means that the Area has many elements of good practice and in some aspects is performing excellently.

Victim Support Nottinghamshire are the first ever Victim Support charity in the country to be awarded the top evaluation which shows that this is not easily achieved. It has been the result of the hard work of many people over many years and the inspector was clear that 'the very healthy position of the charity was as a direct result of the diligent work undertaken by the trustees, staff and volunteers all with a desire to promote more efficient ways of working and consistent service delivery for victims and witnesses.'

It has been the result of the hard work of many people over many years

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 Ms Kate Carty, Chief Crown Prosecutor, Crown Prosecution Service.

Chief Officers on the Board



Kate Carty,
Chief Crown Prosecutor,
Crown Prosecution Service

Steve Green,
Chief Constable,
Nottinghamshire Police



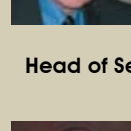
Mark Swales,
Area Director, HM Courts Service



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.