

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

NPS COUNTY DURHAM PROBATION BOARD PUBLICATION SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the County Durham Probation Board Publication Scheme

1 Under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Probation Board has undertaken to adopt and maintain a scheme for the publication of probation service information.

2 This publication scheme has been designed to help you find how the Probation Board carries out its aims and objectives. As part of the National Probation Service, the Board's purpose is to be a law enforcement agency that:

delivers community punishments,

supervises and works with offenders within the terms set by the court or Parole Board in ways that help offenders to reduce their offending and that better protect the public, and

gives support to the victims of serious crimes.

Its aims are to:

protect the public

reduce re-offending

ensure the proper punishment of offenders

ensure offenders are aware of the effects of crime on victims and the public, and

rehabilitate offenders.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE SCHEME

3 The NPS County Durham Probation Board Publication Scheme provides a route map so you can find information held by the Probation Board quickly and easily.

4 The purpose of this publication scheme is to make information readily available before you need to ask for it. The scheme specifies:

- the classes of information we publish or intend to publish
- the manner in which we publish or intend to publish information in each class and
- whether the material is or is intended to be available free of charge or on payment.

- 5 The NPS County Durham Probation Board seeks to be as open as possible, and to comply with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code). Copies of this are available free of charge from

Freedom of Information and Data Protection Unit
Department for Constitutional Affairs
Selborne House
54 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QW.

- 6 We shall continue to meet the requirements of the Code in our dealings with the public until the general right of access under section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act is introduced and the Act replaces the Code.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SCHEME

- 7 The Chief Officer within the local probation area has overall responsibility for this publication scheme. The person responsible for maintaining the publication scheme on a daily basis is the Information Access Officer:

Information Access Officer
NPS County Durham
Forest House
Aykley Heads Business Centre
Durham
DH1 5TS

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

- 8 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 creates a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. The 42 probation boards in England and Wales are public authorities under the Act.
- 9 The Department for Constitutional Affairs leads on policy related to the Act and the Codes of Practice for public authorities on compliance and records management for which the Act provides.
- 10 The Information Commissioner has a duty to promote best practice under the Act and to ensure compliance. The address is
- The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF.
- 11 The Commissioner's website www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk carries useful guidance and reports, as well as information about the role of the Commissioner.

- 12 Subject to certain prescribed conditions and the exemptions set out in Sections 21 to 44 in Part II of the Act, the public have a statutory right:
- to be told whether the Probation Board holds information of the description specified in the request and, if so
 - to have that information communicated to them.
- 13 The Probation Board is committed to the principles of openness embodied in the Act and will release information to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the public interest. The Board will also comply with the Codes of Practice issued by the Department for Constitutional Affairs under Sections 45 and 46 of the Freedom of Information Act.

COPYRIGHT

- 14 The material available through the publication scheme may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium, provided that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading manner. Where, exceptionally, information is included which is subject to copyright or there is a restriction on its use this will be indicated in the scheme and an application for a licence to reproduce the material concerned should be made to the Information Access Officer who will consult the copyright holders concerned.

OBTAINING DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION UNDER THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

- 15 The Probation Board routinely places information on a local probation website www.durhamprobation.gov.uk. It is all freely available for downloading, if you have Internet access. Otherwise copies will be provided on request. Other information published in accordance with this scheme, but not available electronically, will also be sent on request.
- 16 You can request published information by e-mailing the Probation Board at info@durhamprobation.gov.uk, or by telephoning (0191) 383 90 83, or writing to:

NPS County Durham
Forest House
Aykley Heads Business Centre
Durham
DH1 5TS

CHARGING

- 17 Information will be provided free of charge, except where:
- there is a substantial administrative cost in providing it – where this is the case we will provide details
 - there is a cover charge indicated for a published document
 - glossy or other bound paper copies, or in some cases a CD Rom, video or other mediums, are provided.

- 18 No charge will be made for information carried on the web site. For those without Internet access, a single print-out as on the website will be available by post from the request contact point shown above.

COMPLAINTS

- 18 If you have a complaint about the operation of the publication scheme or how the Probation Board has dealt with a request for information, you should write to the Information Access Officer. If you are unhappy with the outcome, or do not wish to discuss the matter with that officer, then you may contact the Chief Officer at the address below:

NPS County Durham
Forest House
Aykley Heads Business Centre
Durham
DH1 5TS

REVIEW

- 20 The Probation Board will review the publication scheme annually and will monitor it regularly.

INFORMATION CLASSES

- 21 This Publication Scheme aims to make large amounts of local probation information readily accessible to the public, on a continuous basis. The Board is committed to releasing more material in the future.
- 22 The Board will make available information under the following classes:

Development and implementation of probation policy

Class: Studies, research reports, statistical compilations by internal staff and external specialists that are relevant to current performance and the development of policy proposals

Class: Inspectorate reports and responses, Ombudsman decisions, subject to data protection legislation.

Class: Explanatory background to local policy proposals and decisions

Class: Local guidance including hostels regimes/rules, schedules of locally delivered programmes and interventions

Class: Public consultation documents, supporting documents and responses

Role, function and management of probation services locally

Class: Annual reports, business plans, board and committee meeting agendas and minutes

Class: Organisation charts, lists of services provided, with contact details

Class: Personnel policies, local recruitment policy or initiatives, leaflets, careers packs

Class: Explanatory material on the Probation Board's dealings with the public, including rules, procedures, internal guidance and administrative manuals

Information for the public

Class: FOI scheme

Class: Local complaints procedure

Class: Details of enforcement and compliance actions and rulings in cases that have been the subject of appeals

Class: Victims support leaflets, local policy/practice statement

Procurement, grants, loans and guarantees

Class: Procurement and supplier policies

Class: Information on specific projects including bidding opportunities, decision criteria, contract performance standards, results of regular performance reviews,

Class: Schedule of contracts awarded

Class: Policies on the awarding of grants, loans and the provision of guarantees; details of grants and loans awarded, guarantees provided, details of reviews and outcomes.

Keynote speeches

Class: Speeches and presentations by local senior management

Press notices/media campaigns

Class: Area press notices/briefings

Class: Local media campaign documentation

Newsletters

Class: Locally produced newsletters and similar communication.