

### **Press Release**

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## **Offenders transform pre-school garden as part of Community Payback**

Children who attend the Small Wonders Pre-school, based in the Community Centre at Crownhill meeting place have a new sandpit and play area thanks to Thames Valley Probation.

Offenders sentenced to Unpaid Work by the courts have transformed the tired-looking garden using plans drawn up by the pre-school. They built decking, a path for the children to play hopscotch, an awning and a covered sandpit.

The project took 11 offenders 17 sessions to regenerate the garden, which is a total of 90 hours' of free, supervised labour.

'I just wanted to say a huge thank you to the Probation Service and the team. The children adore the sandpit and decking, which they use as a stage. The awning is providing fabulous shade from the summer sun,' said Sue Stephenson, parent and garden project manager.

### **Notes for Editors**

#### **Dates and times for photo opportunities**

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### **Unpaid Work in Thames Valley explained**

In the Thames Valley, around 2,000 of the 6,000 offenders we supervise in an average year are carrying out Unpaid Work in the community and complete almost 300,000 hours annually. That's about £1.5m of free labour.

The work benefits local schools, faith groups, charities, community organisations and partnerships. The range of work can include: Graffiti removal, ground clearance, building maintenance and landscaping, improvement to parks and community facilities, general gardening projects, painting and decorating in community centres and meeting places.

Unpaid Work is the name of one of the 12 Requirements that comes under the generic community sentence called a Community Order. Offenders on an Unpaid Work Requirement can be ordered by the courts to do between 40 and 300 unpaid work hours.

Thames Valley Probation works with adult offenders, supervising them through their Community Orders and assisting with rehabilitation. We also supervise offenders released from prison on licence and work with victims of serious crime. The main aim of the service is to increase public protection and reduce the re-offending rate. Community Payback is the name and logo used for the Unpaid Work that offenders carry out. It has been designed to highlight the work of offenders to put something back into communities in which they've offended.

See our website: [www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk) for further details.

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